

GOETZ OF BERLICHINGEN:

A TRAGEDY.

GOETZ of BERLICHINGEN,

WITH THE IRON HAND:

A TRAGEDY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHÉ,

AUTHOR OF THE "SORROWS OF WERTER," ETC.

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GOETZ & BENJAMIN

WITH THE VANDERBILT

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE VANDERBILT"

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P R E F A C E.

GOETZ OF BERLICHINGEN, the hero of the following drama, flourished in the 15th century, during the reign of Maximilian the First, Emperor of Germany. Previous to this period every German Noble holding a fief immediately from the Emperor, exercised on his estate a species of sovereignty subordinate to the Imperial authority alone. Thus, from the princes and prelates possessed of extensive territories, down to the free knights and barons, whose domains consisted of a castle and a few acres of mountain and forest ground, each was a petty monarch upon his own property, independent of all controul but the remote supremacy of the Emperor.

Among the extensive rights conferred by such a constitution, that of waging war

A 3

against

against each other by their own private authority, was most precious to a race of proud and military barons. These private wars were called *feuds*, and the privilege of carrying them on was named *Faufrecht* (club-law). As the empire advanced in civilization, the evils attending feuds became dreadfully conspicuous: each petty knight was by law entitled to make war upon his neighbours without any further ceremony than three days previous defiance by a written form called *Fehdbrief*. Even the Golden Bull, which remedied so many evils in the Germanic body, left this dangerous privilege in full vigour. In time the residence of every free baron became a fortress, from which, as his passions or avarice dictated, fell a band of marauders, to back his quarrel, or to collect an extorted revenue from the merchants who presumed to pass through his domain. At length whole bands of these free-booting nobles used to league together for the purpose of mutual defence against their more powerful neighbours, as likewise for that of predatory incursions against the princes,

princes, free towns, and ecclesiastic states of the empire, whose wealth tempted the needy barons to exercise against them their privilege of waging private war. These confederacies were distinguished by various titles expressive of their object: we find among them the Brotherhood of the Mace, the Knights of the Bloody Sleeve, &c. &c. If one of the brotherhood was attacked, the rest marched without delay to his assistance; and thus, though individually weak, the petty feudatories maintained their ground against the more powerful members of the empire. Their independence and privileges were recognised and secured to them by many edicts; and though hated and occasionally oppressed by the princes and ecclesiastic authorities, to whom in return they were a scourge and a pest, they continued to maintain tenaciously the good old privilege (as they termed it) of *Faustrecht*, which they had inherited from their fathers. Amid the obvious mischiefs attending such a state of society, it must be allowed that it was frequently the means of calling into exercise

the highest heroic virtues. Men daily exposed to danger, and living by the constant exertion of their courage, acquired the virtues as well as the vices of a savage state; and among many instances of cruelty and rapine, occur not a few of the most exalted valour and generosity. If the fortress of a German knight was the dread of the wealthy merchant and abbot, it was often the ready and hospitable refuge of the weary pilgrim and oppressed peasant. Although the owner subsisted by the plunder of the rich, yet he was frequently beneficent to the poor, and beloved by his own family dependents and allies. The spirit of chivalry doubtless contributed much to soften the character of these marauding nobles. A respect for themselves taught them generosity towards their prisoners, and certain acknowledged rules prevented many of the atrocities which it might have been expected would have marked these feuds. No German noble, for example, if made captive, was confined in fetters or in a dungeon, but remained a prisoner at large upon his parole (which was called

called *knightly ward*), either in the castle of his conqueror, or in some other place assigned to him. The same species of honourable captivity was often indulged by the Emperor to offenders of a noble rank, of which some instances will be found in the following pages.

Such was the state of the German nobles, when, on the 7th of August 1495, was published the memorable edict of Maximilian for the establishment of the public peace of the empire. By this ordinance the right of private war was totally abrogated, under the penalty of the Ban of the empire, to be enforced by the Imperial Chamber then instituted. This was at once a sentence of anathema secular and spiritual, containing the dooms of outlawry and excommunication.—This ordinance was highly acceptable to the princes, bishops, and free towns, who had little to gain and much to lose in these perpetual feuds; and they combined to enforce it with no small severity against the petty feudatories:—these, on the other hand,

sensible that the very root of their importance consisted in their privilege of declaring private war, without which they foresaw they would not long be able to maintain their independence, struggled hard against the execution of this edict; by which their confederacies were declared unlawful, and all means taken from them of resisting their richer neighbours.

Upon the jarring interests of the princes and clergy on the one hand, and of the free knights and petty Imperial feudatories on the other, arise the incidents of the following drama. The hero, Goetz of Berlichingen, was in reality a zealous champion for the privileges of the free knights, and was repeatedly laid under the Ban of the empire for the feuds in which he was engaged, from which he was only released in consequence of high reputation for gallantry and generosity. His life was published at Nuremberg 1731; and some account of his exploits, with a declaration of feud (Fehdbrief) issued by him against that city, will
be

be found in Meusel's Enquiry into History, vol. 4th.

While the princes and free knights were thus banded against each other, the peasants and bondsmen remained in the most abject state of ignorance and oppression. This occasioned at different times the most desperate insurrections, resembling in their nature, and in the atrocities committed by the furious insurgents, the rebellions of Tyler and Cade in England, or that of the *Jacquerie* in France. Such an event occurs in the following Tragedy. There is also a scene founded upon the noted institution called the Secret or Invisible Tribunal. With this extraordinary judicatory, the members and executioners of which were unknown, and met in secret to doom to death those criminals whom other courts of justice could not reach, the English reader has been made acquainted by several translations from the German, particularly the excellent romances called Herman of Unna, and Alf von Duilman.

The

The following drama was written by the elegant Author of the Sorrows of Werter, in imitation, it is said, of the manner of Shakespeare. This resemblance is not to be looked for in the style or expression, but in the outline of the characters, and mode of conducting the incidents of the piece. In Germany it is the object of enthusiastic admiration; partly owing doubtless to the force of national partiality towards a performance in which the ancient manners of the country are faithfully and forcibly painted. Losing, however, this advantage, and under all the defects of a translation, the Translator ventures to hope that in the following pages there will still be found something to excite interest. Some liberties have been taken with the original, in omitting two occasional disquisitions upon the Civil Law as practised in Germany. Literal accuracy has been less studied in the translation, than an attempt to convey the spirit and general effect of the piece. Upon the whole, it is hoped the version will be found faithful; of which the Translator is less distrustful,

ful, owing to the friendship of a Gentleman of high literary eminence, who has obligingly taken the trouble of superintending the publication.

EDINBURGH,

3d February 1799.

DRA-

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MAXIMILIAN, Emperor of Germany.
 GOETZ von Berlichingen, a free knight of the empire.
 Elizabeth, his wife.
 Maria, his sister.
 Charles, his son—a boy.
 George, his page.
 Bishop of Bamberg.
 Adelbert von Weislingen, a free German knight of the
 empire.
 Adela von Walldorf, widow of the Count von Walldorf.
 Leibtraut, a courtier of the Bishop's.
 Abbot of Fuldah, residing at the Bishop's court.
 Olearius, a doctor of laws.
 Brother Martin, a monk.
 Hans von Selbifs, }
 Francis von Seckingen, } Free knights, in alliance with
 } with Goetz.
 Lerse, a cavalier.
 Francis, 'squire to Weislingen.
 Female Attendant on Adela.
 President, Accuser, and Avenger of the Secret Tribunal.
 Mezler,
 Sievers, }
 Link, }
 Kohl, }
 Wild, } Leaders of the Insurgent Peasantry.
 Imperial Commissioners.
 Two merchants of Nuremberg.
 Magistrates of Heilbron.
 Maximilian Stumpf, a vassal of the Palgrave.

An

An unknown.

Bride's father,	} Peasants.
Bride,	
Bridegroom,	

Gipsy captain.

Gipsy mother and women.

Sticks and Wolf, gipsies.

Imperial captain.

Imperial officers.

Innkeeper.

Centinel.

Serjeant-at-arms.

Imperial Soldiers—Troopers belonging to Goetz, to
Selbifs, to Seckingen, and to Weiflingen—Peasants—
Gipsies—Judges of the Secret Tribunal—Gaolers—
Courtiers, &c. &c. &c.

GOETZ OF BERLICHINGEN,

WITH THE IRON HAND.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

An Inn at Schwarzenbergh in Franconia—Mezler and Sievers, two Swabian peasants, are seated at a table—At the fire, at some distance from them, two cavaliers from Bamberg—The innkeeper.

SIEVERS.

HANSEL! Another cup of brandy—and Christian measure.

INNKEEPER.

Thou art a Never-enough.

MEZLER. [*Apart to Sievers.*]

Repeat again that about Berlichingen—These

B

Bambergers

Bambergers seem to take offence; they look
fulky.

SIEVERS.

Bambergers!—What are they about here?

MEZLER.

Weisslingen has been two days up yonder at the
Castle with the Earl—they came with him from
I know not where; they are his attendants—He
is about to return back to Bamberg.

SIEVERS.

Who is that Weisslingen?

MEZLER.

The Bishop of Bamberg's right hand! a power-
ful lord, who lies lurking for the means of playing
Goetz some trick.

SIEVERS.

He had better take care of himself.

MEZLER.

Prithee tell that story once more. [*Aloud.*]
How long is it since Goetz had a new dispute with
the Bishop? I thought all had been reconciled
and smoothed up between them.

SIEVERS.

Aye! Reconciliation with Priests!.....When the
Bishop saw he could do no good, and always got
the worse at hard blows, he complained to the
Circle, and took care to make a good accommo-
dation; while honest Berlichingen was condemned
unheard,

unheard, as he always is, even when he has the right.

MEZLER.

God blefs him ! a worthy nobleman.

SIEVERS.

Only think ! Was it not shameful ? They have now imprifoned a page of his, even without the leaft crime—but they will be foon mauled for that.

MEZLER.

How ftupidly the laft enterprife mifgave ! The Priest would have been in a furious chafe.

SIEVERS.

I do not believe it was owing to negligence—Look you, all had been difcovered by Goetz' fpies ; we had the very beft intelligence when the Bifhop would come from the baths, with how many attendants, and which way ; and, had it not been betrayed by fome falfe brother, Goetz would have bleffed his bath for him.

FIRST BAMBERGER.

What are you prating there about our Bifhop ? I think you feek a fcuffle.

SIEVERS.

Mind your own matters ; you have nothing to do with our table.

SECOND BAMBERGER.

Who taught you to fpeak difrefpectfully of our Bifhop ?

B 2

SIEVERS.

SIEVERS.

Am I to answer *your* questions?—Only mind the gluttons—[*The first Bamberger strikes him a box on the ear.*]

MEZLER.

Fell the hound dead!

SECOND BAMBERGER.

Here! if you dare—[*They fall upon each other; a scuffle.*]

INNKEEPER. [*Separating them.*]

Will you remain quiet! Zounds! Get out of the house if you have any thing to do together; in this place I will have order and decency. [*He gets the Bamberg Cavaliers out at the door.*—And what did you want, ye asses?

MEZLER.

No bad names, Hanfel! your glasses may suffer. Come, comrade, we'll go and have the game out.

Enter two Cavaliers.

FIRST CAVALIER.

What's the matter?

SIEVERS.

Ah! Good day, Peter!—Good day, Beta!—From whence?

SECOND CAVALIER. [*Making signs.*]

You understand, not to mention whom we serve.

SIEVERS.

SIEVERS.

Is your master Goetz far from this at present?

FIRST CAVALIER.

Hold your peace!—Have you had a quarrel?

SIEVERS.

You must have met the fellows without—they are Bambergers.

FIRST CAVALIER.

What brings them here?

SIEVERS.

They attend Weislingen, who is above with the Earl at the Castle.

FIRST CAVALIER.

Weislingen?

SECOND CAVALIER.

[*Aside to his companion.*]

Peter, we have found the game—How long has he been here?

MEZLER.

Two days—but he goes off to-day, as I heard one of the rascals say.

FIRST CAVALIER. [*Aside.*]

Did I not tell thee he was here?—We have now no time to spare—Come—

SIEVERS.

Help us first to drub the Bambergers.

SECOND CAVALIER.

There are already two of you—We must away—
Adieu!

[*Exeunt both Cavaliers.*]

B 3

SIEVERS.

SIEVERS.

Flinching dogs, these troopers! They won't fight a stroke without pay.

MEZLER.

I could swear they have something on hand.—Whom do they serve?

SIEVERS.

I should hardly tell——They serve Goetz.

MEZLER.

So!—Well, now will we out upon these dogs.... While I have a quarter-staff I care not for their spits.

SIEVERS.

If we durst but once drub their masters so, who drag the skin over our ears! [Exeunt.]

SCENE *changes to the front of a cottage in a thick forest; Goetz de Berlichingen discovered walking among the trees before the door.*

GOETZ.

Where linger my servants?—I must walk up and down, or sleep will overcome me—Five days and nights already upon the watch—But freedom gives relish to this mode of life; and when I have thee, Weisslingen, I may have some rest. [*Fills a glass of wine and drinks; looks at the flask.*]—Again empty.—George!—While this and my courage lasts, I can laugh at their principalities and powers!

powers!—They fend round their favourite Weislingen to their uncles and cousins to calumniate my character—Very well—I am awake.—Thou didst escape me, Bishop; but thy dear Weislingen may pay the score.—George!—Does the boy not hear?—George! George!

Enter George, endeavouring to put off the corslet of a full-grown man.

GOETZ.

What kept thee? Wert thou asleep?—What masquerade is this? in the devil's name!—Come hither; thou dost not look amiss. Don't be ashamed, boy; thou art gallant. Ah! if thou couldst but fill it!—Is it Hans's cuirass?

GEORGE.

He wished to sleep a little, and unclasp'd it.

GOETZ.

He is more delicate than his master.

GEORGE.

Do not be angry! I took it gently away and put it on, and took my father's old sword from the wall, and sallied out to the meadow—

GOETZ.

And laid about you?—Fine work among the brambles and thorns!—Is Hans asleep?

GEORGE.

He started up and cried to me when you called

B 4

—I was

—I was trying to unclasp it when I heard you twice or thrice.

GOETZ.

Go take back his cuirass to him, and tell him to be ready with the horses.

GEORGE.

I have fed them and rubbed them well down; they may come out when you will.

GOETZ.

Bring me a stoup of wine. Give Hans a glass, and tell him to be merry—there is good cause; I expect the return of my scouts every moment.

GEORGE.

Ah! mighty Sir!

GOETZ.

What's the matter with thee?

GEORGE.

May I not go along?

GOETZ.

Another time, George! when we are intercepting merchants and plundering waggons—

GEORGE.

Another time!—You have said that so often.—O this time, this time! I will only sculk behind; just peep at a side—I will gather up all the shot arrows for you.

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

The next time, George!—You must first have a proper dress; a hauberk, and a lance.

GEORGE.

Take me with you!—Had I been with you last time, you would not have lost your cross-bow.

GOETZ.

Do you know that?

GEORGE.

You threw it at your antagonist's head; one of his squires picked it up, and ran off with it.—Don't I know it?

GOETZ.

Did my people tell you so?

GEORGE.

O yes: and for doing so, I play them all sorts of tunes on the fife while they dress the horses, and teach them such charming songs—

GOETZ.

Thou art a brave boy.

GEORGE.

Take me with you to prove myself so.

GOETZ.

The next time, on my word!—Thou must not go to battle unarmed as thou art—Besides, the approaching hour requires men. I tell thee, my boy, it will be a dear time—Princes shall beg their treasure

sure from a man they hate. Go, George, give Hans his armour again, and bring me wine.—
[*Exit George.*]—Where can my people stay?—It is incomprehensible!—A monk!—What brings him here?

Enter Brother Martin.

GOETZ.

Worthy father, good evening! Whither so late? Though a man of sacred peace, thou shamest many knights.

MARTIN.

Thanks, noble Sir!—I stand before you an unworthy brother of the order of St. Augustin; my christened name Martin, from the holy saint.

GOETZ.

You are tired, brother Martin, and without doubt thirsty—

Enter George with wine.

GOETZ.

Here, in good time, comes wine!

MARTIN.

For me a draught of water. I dare drink no wine.

GOETZ.

Is it against your vow?

MARTIN.

Noble Sir, to drink wine is not against my vow;
but

but because wine when drunken is against my vow,
therefore I drink it not.

GOETZ.

How do you mean?

MARTIN.

When thou hast eaten and drunken, thou art as
it were new born—stronger, bolder, apter for ac-
tion. After wine thou art double what thou
shouldst be!—twice as ingenious, twice as enter-
prising, and twice as active.

GOETZ.

True—I feel it so.

MARTIN.

Therefore shouldst thou drink it—but we——
[*George brings water. Goetz speaks to him apart.*]

GOETZ.

Go to the road from Darbach; lie down with
thy ear to the earth, and listen for the tread of
horses. Return immediately.

MARTIN.

But we, on the other hand, when we have eaten
and drunken, are the reverse of what we should be.
Our sleepy digestion depresses our mental powers;
in a weak body such sloth excites desires, which in-
crease with the cause which produced them.

GOETZ.

One glass, brother Martin, will not set you
asleep.

asleep. You have come far to-day—[*Helps him to wine.*—Here's to all warriors !

MARTIN.

In God's name !—I cannot defend idle people—yet all monks are not idle ; they do what they can : I am just come from St. Bede, where I slept last night. The Prior carried me into their garden, where they had raised beans, excellent sallad, cabbages to a wish, and such cauliflowers and artichokes as you will hardly find in Europe.

GOETZ.

That is no part of your business ?—[*Goes out and looks anxiously after the boy. Returns.*]

MARTIN.

Would God had made me a gardener, or some other labourer, I might then have been happy ! My Abbot loves me ; the convent is involved in business ; he knows I cannot rest idle, and so he sends me to manage what is to be done ; I go to the Bishop of Constance.

GOETZ.

Another glass—A happy expedition !

MARTIN.

The like——

GOETZ.

Why do you look at me so fixedly, brother ?

MARTIN.

I was admiring your armour.

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

Would you have liked a suit? It is heavy, and
toilsome to bear.

MARTIN.

What is not toilsome in this world?—But what
so much so as to renounce our very nature! Poverty,
chastity, obedience—three vows, each of which
singly is dreadful to humanity—united, insupport-
able; and to spend a life-time under this burthen,
or to pant comfortless under the depressing load of
an offended conscience—Ah! Sir Knight, what are
the toils of your life compared to the sorrows of a
state, which, from a misinterpreted notion of the
Deity, condemns as crimes even those actions and
desires through which we exist.

GOETZ.

Were your vow less sacred, I would give you a
suit of armour and a steed, and we should go to-
gether.

MARTIN.

Would to heaven my shoulders had strength to
bear harness, and my arm to unhorse an enemy!—
Poor weak hand, accustomed to swing censers, to
bear crosses and banners of peace, how couldst thou
manage the lance and falchion? My voice, tuned
only to Aves and Halleluiahs, would be a herald of
my weakness to a superior enemy; otherwise should
no vows keep me from entering an order founded
by the Creator himself.

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

To our happy return ! [*Drinks.*]

MARTIN.

I pledge you upon your account only ! Return to my prison must be to me ever unhappy. When you, Sir Knight, return to your walls with the consciousness of your strength and gallantry, which no fatigue can diminish ; when you, for the first time, after a long absence, stretch yourself unarmed upon your bed, secure from the attack of enemies, and give yourself up to a sleep, sweeter than the draught after thirst—then can I speak of happiness.

GOETZ.

And accordingly it comes but seldom !

MARTIN.

But when it does come, it is a foretaste of paradise. When you return back laden with hostile spoils, and tell, " Such a one I struck from his horse ere he could discharge his piece—such another I overthrew, horse and man ;" then you ride your Castle around, and——

GOETZ.

What mean you ?

MARTIN.

And your wife—[*Fills a glass.*] To the health of your lady ! You have one ?

GOETZ.

A virtuous, noble wife !

MARTIN.

MARTIN.

Well for him who can say so; his life is doubled.
The blessing was denied for me, yet was it the
finishing crown of creation. [*He wipes his eyes.*]

GOETZ. [*Aside.*]

I grieve for him. The sense of his situation
chills his heart.

Enter George, breathless.

GEORGE.

My Lord, my Lord, horses at the gallop!—two
of them——They for certain——

GOETZ.

Bring out my steed; let Hans mount. Fare-
well, dear brother!—Be cheerful and duteous;
God will give space for exertion.

MARTIN.

Let me request your name.

GOETZ.

Pardon me—Farewell! [*Gives his left hand.*]

MARTIN.

Why the left?—Am I unworthy of the knightly
right hand?

GOETZ.

Were you the Emperor, you must be satisfied
with this. My right-hand, though not useless in
combat, is unresponsive to the grasp of affection.

It is one with its mail'd gauntlet—You see, it is iron!

MARTIN.

Then art thou Goetz of Berlichingen. I thank thee, Heaven, who hast shewn me the man whom princes hate, but to whom the oppressed throng! Let me kiss this hand, let me kiss it.

GOETZ.

You must not!

MARTIN.

Let me, let me—Thou hand, more worth than the relique through which the most sacred blood has flowed! dead though thou seemest, thou livest a witness of the noblest confidence in God.

GOETZ [*Adjusts his helmet, and takes his lance*].

MARTIN.

There was a monk among us about a year, who visited you when your hand was shot off before Landshut. How he used to tell us what you suffered, and your grief at being disabled for your profession of arms; till you heard of one who had also lost a hand, and yet served long a gallant knight. I shall never forget it.

Enter Peter and the other Cavalier. They speak apart with Goetz.

MARTIN [*Going on.*]

I shall never forget his words in the most noble,
the

the most unreserved confidence in God: "If I
"had twelve hands, what would they avail me
"without his grace? then may I with only one and
"heaven to friend——"

GOETZ.

In the wood of Haslach too? [*Returns to
Martin.*] Farewell, worthy brother!

MARTIN.

Forget me not, as I shall never forget thee!

[*Exeunt Goetz and his Troopers.*]

MARTIN.

The fight of him touched my heart—He spoke
not, and my spirit funk under his—Yet it is a plea-
sure to have seen a great man.

GEORGE.

Worthy Sir, you will sleep here?

MARTIN.

Can I have a bed?

GEORGE.

No, Sir! I know a bed only by hearsay; in
our lodgings there is but straw.

MARTIN.

It will serve. What is thy name?

GEORGE.

George, Sir.

MARTIN.

George!—Thou hast a gallant patron-faint.

C

GEORGE.

GEORGE.

They say he was a knight; that would I like to be!

MARTIN.

Stop! [*Takes a picture from his breviary and gives it to the Page.*] There thou hast him—follow his example; be brave, and fear God.

[*Exit into the cottage.*]

GEORGE.

Ah! what a charming grey steed!—If I had but one like that—and the gilded armour—There is an ugly dragon—At present I shoot nothing but sparrows. O St. George! make me but tall and strong; give me a lance, armour, and a horse, and then let the dragon come against me when it will.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE, *An Apartment in Jaxthausen, the Castle of Goetz of Berlichingen. Elizabeth, Maria, and Charles discovered.*

CHARLES.

Pray now, dear aunt, tell me again that story of the good child; it is so pretty—

MARIA.

Do you tell it to me, little rogue! that I may see if you pay attention.

CHARLES.

Wait then till I think——“There was once
“upon”

upon"—Yes—"There was once upon a time a
"child, and his mother was sick; so the child
"went—"

MARIA.

No, no!—"Then said his mother—"

CHARLES.

"I am sick—"

MARIA.

"And cannot go out :"

CHARLES.

"And gave him money and said, Go and buy
"yourself a breakfast."

MARIA.

"The child went.—There met him an old man
"that was—" Now, Charles!

CHARLES.

"—that was—old—"

MARIA.

Indeed!—"that was not able to walk, and
"said, Dear child—"

CHARLES.

"—give me something; I have eat not a morsel
"yesterday or to-day. Then the child gave him
"the money—"

MARIA.

"—that should have bought his breakfast."

CHARLES.

"Then said the old man—"

C 2

MARIA.

MARIA.

"Then the old man took the child by the hand—"

CHARLES.

"—by the hand, and said—and became a fine beautiful faint—and said—"

MARIA.

"Dear child! the sacred Virgin rewards thee for thy benevolence through me: whatever sick person thou touchest—"

CHARLES.

"—with the hand—"—It was the right hand, I think.

MARIA.

Yes.

CHARLES.

"—he will immediately become well."

MARIA.

"Then the child went home, and could not speak for joy—"

CHARLES.

"—and fell upon his mother's neck and wept."

MARIA.

"Then the mother cried, What's the matter with me? and became—"

CHARLES.

"—became—became—"

MARIA.

You do not mind—"and became well. And
"the

“the child cured kings and emperors, and became
“so rich that he built a great abbey.”

ELIZABETH.

I cannot understand why my husband stays. He
has been away five days and nights, and he expected
to have done his business much sooner.

MARIA.

I am very uneasy about it. Were I married to
a man who ever incurred such danger, I should die
the first day.

ELIZABETH.

Therefore I thank God, who has made me of
harder stuff!

CHARLES.

But must my father always ride out, when it is
so dangerous?

MARIA.

Such is his good pleasure.

ELIZABETH.

Indeed he must, dear Charles!

CHARLES.

Why?

ELIZABETH.

Do you not remember the last time he rode out
when he brought you these fine things?

CHARLES.

Will he bring me any thing now?

C 3

ELIZA-

ELIZABETH.

I believe so. Listen : There was a poor man at Stutgard who shot excellently with the bow, and gained a prize from the magistrates—

CHARLES.

How much ?

ELIZABETH.

A hundred dollars ;—and afterwards they would not pay him.

MARIA.

That was base, Charles.

CHARLES.

Shabby people !

ELIZABETH.

The poor man came to your father and besought him to help him to his money ; then your father rode out and intercepted two convoys of merchandise, and plagued them till they paid the money.—Would not you have ridden out too ?

CHARLES.

No—For one must go through thick woods, where there are gipsies and witches—

ELIZABETH.

You little rogue !—Afraid of witches !

MARIA.

You are right, Charles !—Live at home in your castle, like a quiet Christian knight—One may do
a great

a great deal of good out of one's own fortune.
These redressers of wrongs do more harm than good by their interference.

ELIZABETH.

Sister, you know not what you are saying—
God grant our boy may turn brave as he grows up,
and pull down that Weislingen, who has dealt so
faithlessly with my husband!

MARIA.

We cannot agree in this, Eliza—My brother is
highly incensed, and thou art so also; but I am
cooler in the business, and can be less inveterate.

ELIZABETH.

Weislingen cannot be defended.

MARIA.

What I have heard of him has pleased me—Even
thy husband speaks him good and affectionate—
How happy was their youth when they were both
pages of honour to the Margrave!

ELIZABETH.

That may be :—But only tell me, how can the
man be good who lays ambushes for his best and
truest friend? who has sold his service to the ene-
mies of my husband? and, by invidious misrepre-
sentations, alienates from us our noble Emperor,
naturally so gracious?—[*A horn winded.*]

C 4

CHARLES.

CHARLES.

Papa! Papa!—[*The Warder sounds his horn. Henry opens the gate.*]

ELIZABETH.

There he comes with booty !

Enter Peter.

PETER:

We have hunted—we have caught the game!—
God save you, noble ladies !

ELIZABETH.

Have you Weislingen?

PETER.

Himself, and three followers.

ELIZABETH.

How came you to stay so long?

PETER.

We watched for him between Nuremberg and Bamberg, but he did not come, though we knew he had set out. At length we found him; he had struck off sideways, and was living quietly with the Earl at Schwarzenberg.

ELIZABETH.

Then will my husband have *him* next for an enemy.

PETER.

I told this immediately to my master—Up and
away

away we rode for the forest of Haslach. And it was curious, while we were riding thither that night, that a shepherd was watching, and five wolves fell upon the flock and were taken. Then my master laughed and said, Good luck to us all, dear companion, both to you and us!—And the good omen overjoyed us.—Just then Weislingen came riding along with four attendants—

MARIA.

My heart shudders in my bosom!

PETER.

My comrade and I threw ourselves suddenly on him, and clung to him as if we were one body, while my master and the others fell upon the servants. They were all taken, except one who escaped.

ELIZABETH.

I am curious to see him—Will they come soon?

PETER.

Immediately—They are riding over the hill.

MARIA.

He will be cast down and dejected?

PETER.

He looks gloomy enough.

MARIA.

The sight of his distress will grieve me!

ELIZA-

ELIZABETH.

O! I must get food ready—You must be all hungry?

PETER.

Right hungry, truly.

ELIZABETH.

Take the cellar keys and draw the best wine—
You have deserv'd the best. *[Exit Elizabeth.]*

CHARLES.

I'll go with aunt.

MARIA.

Come then, you rogue!

[Exit Charles and Maria.]

PETER.

He'll never be his father—At his years he was in the stable—

*Enter Goetz, Weislingen, Hans, and other Cavaliers,
as from horseback.*

GOETZ.

[Laying his helmet and sword on a table.]

Unclasp my armour, and give me my doublet—
Ease will refresh me.—Brother Martin said well—
You have put us out of wind, Weislingen!

[Weislingen answers nothing, but paces up and down.]

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

Be of good heart!—Come, unarm yourself!—Where are your clothes?—Not lost, I hope, in the scuffle?—[*To the Attendants.*] Go, ask his servants; open the trunks, and see that nothing is missing.—Or I can lend you some of mine.

WEISLINGEN.

Let me remain as I am—It is all one.

GOETZ.

I can give you a handsome clean doublet, but it is only of linen—It has grown too little for me—I had it on at the marriage of the Lord Palsgrave, when your Bishop was so incensed at me.—About a fortnight before I had sunk two of his vessels upon the Maine—I was going up stairs to the venison in the inn at Heidelberg, with Francis of Seckingen. Before you get quite up, there is a landing-place with iron rails—there stood the Bishop, and gave Frank his hand as he passed, and the like to me that was close behind him. I laughed in my sleeve, and went to the Landgrave of Hanau, who was always my noble friend, and told him, “The Bishop has given me his hand, but I wot well he did not know me.” The Bishop heard me, for I was speaking loud—He came to us angrily, and said, “True, I gave thee my hand, because I knew thee not indeed.”—To which I answered, “I marked that, my Lord; and so take your shake of the
1 hand

hand back again!"—The manikin's neck grew red as a crab for spite, and he went up the room and complained to the Palsgrave Lewis and the Princes of Nassau.—But we have had much to do together since that.

WEISLINGEN.

I wish you would leave me to myself!

GOETZ.

Why so?—I entreat you be at rest. You are in my power, and I will not misuse it.

WEISLINGEN.

That I am little anxious about—Your duty as a knight prescribes your conduct.

GOETZ.

And you know how sacred it is to me.

WEISLINGEN.

I am taken—What follows is indifferent.

GOETZ.

You should not say so.—Had you been taken by a prince and shut up fettered in a dungeon, your gaoler directed to drive sleep from your eyes—

Enter Servants with clothes. Weislingen unarms and shifts himself. Enter Charles.

CHARLES.

Good morrow, papa!

GOETZ.

GOETZ [*Kisses him*].

Good morrow, boy!—How have you been behaving?

CHARLES.

Very well.—Aunt says I am a good boy.

GOETZ.

That's right.

CHARLES.

Have you brought me any thing?

GOETZ.

Nothing this time.

CHARLES.

I have learned a great deal—

GOETZ.

Aye!

CHARLES.

Shall I tell you about the good boy?

GOETZ.

After dinner.

CHARLES.

And I know something else.

GOETZ.

What may that be?

CHARLES.

“Jaxthausen is a village and castle upon the
“Jaxt, which has appertained in property and heri-
“tage for two hundred years to the Lords of Ber-
“lichingen—”

GOETZ.

Do you know the Lord of Berlichingen?—
[*Charles stares at him.*] With all his extensive
learning he does not know his own father.—Whom
does Jaxthausen belong to?

CHARLES.

“Jaxthausen is a village and castle upon the
“Jaxt—”

GOETZ.

I did not ask about that—I knew every path, pass,
and ford about the place, before ever I knew the
name of the village, castle, or river.—Is your
mother in the kitchen?

CHARLES.

Yes, papa!—They are dressing a lamb, with nice
white turnips.

GOETZ.

Do you know that too, Jack Turnspit?

CHARLES.

And my aunt is roasting an apple for me to eat
after dinner—

GOETZ.

Can't you eat it raw?

CHARLES.

It tastes better roasted.

GOETZ.

You must have a tid-bit, must you?—Weillingen,
I will

I will be with you immediately—I go to see my wife.—Come, Charles!

CHARLES.

Who is that man?

GOETZ.

Bid him welcome.—Tell him to be cheerful.

CHARLES.

There's my hand, man!—Be cheerful—for the dinner will be ready soon.

WEISLINGEN.

[Takes up the child and kisses him.]

Happy boy! that knowest no worse evil than the delay of dinner. May you live to have much joy in your son, Berlichingen!

GOETZ.

Where there is most light, the shades are deepest.—Yet I thank God for him.—We'll see what they are about. *[Exit with Charles and Servants.]*

WEISLINGEN.

O that I could but wake and find this all a dream!—In the power of Berlichingen!—of him from whom I had so far detached myself—whose remembrance I shunned like fire—whom I hoped to overpower!—and he still the old true-hearted Goetz!—O Adelbert! couldst thou recall the days when we played as children, and drove the mimic chase round this hall; then thou lovedst him, prizedst him as thy soul! Who can be near him
and

and hate him?—Alas ! I am not here such as I was—Happy days ! ye are gone—There in his chair by the chimney sat old Berlichingen, while we played around him, and loved each other like cherubs !—How anxious will be the Bishop and all my friends !—Well ; I wot the whole country will sympathize with my misfortune. But what does it avail ? Can that reflection give me the peace after which I struggle ?

Re-enter Goetz with wine and beakers.

GOETZ.

We'll take a glass till dinner is ready. Come, sit down—think yourself at home ! Consider you are once more the guest of Goetz. It is long since we have sat side by side and emptied a flagon together—*[Fills.]* Come : A light heart !

WEISLINGEN.

Those times are over.

GOETZ.

God forbid ! We shall hardly find more pleasant days than those which we spent together at the Margrave's court—when we were inseparable night and day. I think with pleasure on the days of my youth.—Do you remember the battle I had with the Polander, and how I broke his frizzled pate for him ?

WEISLIN-

WEISLINGEN.

It was at table; and he struck at you with a knife.

GOETZ.

However, I came off conqueror—And you had a quarrel upon the account with his comrade. We always stuck together like brave boys—[*Fills and hands to Weislingen.*] I shall never forget how the Margrave used to call us Castor and Pollux: it does me good to think of it.

WEISLINGEN.

The Bishop of Wurtzburg called us so first.

GOETZ.

That Bishop was a learned clerk, and withal so gentle—I shall remember as long as I live how he used to caress us, praise our union, and describe the good fortune of the man who has an adopted brother in a friend.

WEISLINGEN.

No more of that!

GOETZ.

Does it displease you?—I know nothing more delightful after fatigue than to talk over old stories. Indeed, when I recall to mind how we were almost the same being, body and soul, and how I thought we were to continue so all our lives—Was not that my sole comfort when this hand was shot away at Landshut, and when you nursed and tended me like a

D

brother?

brother?—I hoped Adelbert would in future be my right hand.—And now—

WEISLINGEN.

Alas !

GOETZ.

Hadst thou followed me when I wished thee to go to Brabant with me, all would have remained well. But then that unhappy turn for Court-dangling seized thee, and thy coquetting and flirting with idle women.—I always told thee, when thou wouldst mix with these lounging, begging Court-sycophants, and entertain them with gossiping about unlucky matches and seduced girls, and such trash as they are interested about—I always told thee, Adelbert, thou wilt become a rogue.

WEISLINGEN.

Why all this ?

GOETZ.

Would to God I could forget it, or that it were otherwise !—Art thou not as free and as nobly born as any in Germany, independent, holding under the Emperor alone—and dost thou not crouch amongst vassals?—What is the Bishop to thee? Allow he is thy neighbour, and can do thee a shrewd turn, hast thou not an arm and friends to requite him in kind? Art thou ignorant of the noble situation of a free knight, who rests only upon
God,

God, the Emperor, and himself, that thou canst bear thus to crawl at the footstool of a selfish malicious Priest?

WEISLINGEN.

Let me speak!

GOETZ.

What canst thou say?

WEISLINGEN.

You look upon the Princes as the wolf upon the shepherd. And yet, canst thou blame them for uniting in the defence of their territories and property? Are they a moment secure from the unruly chivalry of your free knights, who plunder their vassals upon the very high-roads, and sack their castles and towns? While upon the frontiers the public enemy threaten to over-run the lands of our dear Emperor, and, while he needs their assistance, they can scarce maintain their own security—is it not our good genius which at this moment suggests a mean of bringing peace to Germany, of securing the administration of justice, and giving to great and small the blessings of quiet? For this purpose is our confederacy; and dost thou blame us for securing the protection of the powerful Princes our neighbours, instead of relying on that of the Emperor, who is so far removed from us, and is hardly able to protect himself?

D 2

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

Yes, yes, I understand you. Weislingen, were the Princes as you paint them, we should be all agreed—all at peace and quiet ! Yes, every bird of prey naturally likes to eat its plunder undisturbed. The general weal !—They will hardly acquire untimely grey hairs in studying for that.—And with the Emperor they play a fine game—Every day comes some new adviser and gives his opinion. The Emperor means well, and would gladly put things to rights—but because a great man can soon give an order, and by a single word put a thousand hands into motion, he therefore thinks his orders will be as speedily accomplished. Then come ordinances upon ordinances contradictory of each other, while the Princes all the while obey those only which serve their own interest, and help them to press under their footstool their less powerful neighbours—and all the while they talk of the quiet and peace of the Empire !—I will be sworn, many a one thanks God in his heart that the Turk keeps the Emperor from looking into these affairs !

WEISLINGEN.

You view things your own way.

GOETZ.

So does every one. The question is, which is the right light in which they should be regarded ?—And your plans are of the darkest.

WEISLIN-

WEISLINGEN.

You may say what you will; I am your prisoner.

GOETZ.

When your conscience is free, so are you.—But we talked of the general tranquillity—I stood as a boy of sixteen with the Margrave at an Imperial Diet. What harangues the Princes made! and worst of all, your spiritual allies—The Bishop rung into the Emperor's ears his regard for justice, till one wondered again—And now he has imprisoned a page of mine, at the very time when our quarrels were all accommodated, and I thought of nothing less. Is not all betwixt us settled? What is his business with the boy?

WEISLINGEN.

It was done without his knowledge.

GOETZ.

Then why does he not release him?

WEISLINGEN.

He has not borne himself as he should do.

GOETZ.

Not as he should do? By my honour he has done as he should do, as surely as he was imprisoned both with your knowledge and the Bishop's! Do you think I am come into the world this very day, that I cannot see the tendency of all this?

WEISLINGEN.

Your suspicions do us injustice.

GOETZ.

Weislingen, shall I tell you the truth? Inconsiderable as I am, I am a thorn in your eyes, and Selbigs and Seckingen are no less so, while we retain our firm resolution to die sooner than to thank any one but God for the air we breathe, or pledge our faith and homage to any one but the Emperor. Hence they goad me from every quarter, blacken my character with the Emperor, and among my friends and neighbours, and spy about for advantage against me. They would fain take me out of the way; that was the reason for imprisoning the page whom I had dispatched for intelligence: and you now say he did not bear himself as he should do, because he would not betray my secrets—And thou, Weislingen, art their tool!

WEISLINGEN.

Berlichingen!

GOETZ.

No more about it—I am an enemy to long explanations; they deceive either the maker or the hearer, and for the most part both.

Enter Charles.

CHARLES.

Dinner, father!

GOETZ.

Good news!—Come, I hope the company of my women folks will revive you—You always liked the girls—Aye, aye, they can tell many pretty stories of you. [Exeunt.]

SCENE *changes to the Bishop of Bamberg's Palace.*
The Bishop, the Abbot of Fulda, Olearius, Liebtraut, and Courtiers at table—The dessert and wine before them.

BISHOP.

Are there many of the German nobility at your academy of Bologna?

OLEARIUS.

Both of nobles and burghers; and, without exaggeration, they acquire the most brilliant reputation. It is a proverb in the university: "As studious as a German noble."

ABBOT.

Aye!

LIEBTRAUT.

As studious as a German noble!—What may one not live to hear?—That have I never heard before.

OLEARIUS.

Yes, they are the admiration of the whole university. Some of the oldest and most learned will

be created even Doctors. The Emperor will doubtless be happy to entrust to them the highest offices.

ABBOT.

Do you know, for instance, a young man—a Hessian—

OLEARIUS.

There are many Hessians with us.

ABBOT.

His name was——Does nobody remember it? His mother was of the What d'ye call them's?—Oh!—his father has but one eye—and is a marshal—

LIEBTRAUT.

Von Wildenholz!

OLEARIUS.

I know him well. He is highly esteemed for his force in disputation.

ABBOT.

He has that from his mother.

LIEBTRAUT.

But I never heard that his father esteemed her the more for it.

BISHOP.

How call you the emperor that wrote your *Corpus Juris*?

OLEARIUS.

Justinian.

BISHOP.

BISHOP.

A worthy prince :—To his heath !

OLEARIUS.

To his memory ! [*They drink.*]

ABBOT.

That must be a charming book.

OLEARIUS.

It may be called the book of books, comprehending every rule.

ABBOT.

Every rule !—Then the ten commandments must be in it.

OLEARIUS.

By implication; not explicitly.

ABBOT.

I meant so ; plainly set down, without any explanation.

BISHOP.

But the best is, you tell us that a State can be maintained in the surest peace and obedience by receiving that statute-book.

OLEARIUS.

Doubtless.

BISHOP.

All doctors of laws ! [*They drink.*]

OLEARIUS.

Would men spoke thus in my country !

ABBOT.

ABBOT.

Whence come you, most learned Sir ?

OLEARIUS.

From Frankfort, at your Eminence's service !

BISHOP.

Are you not on good terms with your countrymen ?—How comes that ?

OLEARIUS.

It is odd enough—but when I went last there to collect my father's effects, the populace pelted me with stones when they heard I was a civilian.

ABBOT.

God keep us !

OLEARIUS.

It is because their tribunal, which they hold in great respect, is occupied by vulgar people, ignorant of the Roman law. They decide according to certain edicts of their own, and some old customs recognised in the city and neighbourhood.

ABBOT.

That's very right.

OLEARIUS.

Yes : but then the life of man is short, and in one generation causes of every description cannot be decided ; therefore it is better to preserve a collection of rules to be observed through all ages—
and

and such is our Corpus Juris, which insures us against the mutability of judges.

ABBOT.

That's a great deal better.

OLEARIUS.

But the people are ignorant of that ; and, curious as they are after novelties, hate any innovation in their laws, be it ever so much for the better. They hate a jurist as if he were a cut-purse or a subverter of the state, and become furious if one attempts to settle among them.

LIEBTRAUT.

You come from Frankfort ?—I know the place well—we tasted of your good cheer there at the Emperor's coronation—but I know no one in that town of your name.

OLEARIUS.

My father's name was Oilman—But after the example of many Curlians, for the decoration of the title-page of my legal treatises, I have latinised the name to Olearius.

LIEBTRAUT.

You did well to disguise it :—a prophet is not honoured in his own country—nor in the language thereof.

OLEARIUS.

That was not the cause.

LIEB-

LIEBTRAUT.

Every thing has two reasons.

ABBOT.

A prophet is not honoured in his own country.

LIEBTRAUT.

But do you know why, most reverend Sir ?

ABBOT.

Because he was born and bred up there.

LIEBTRAUT.

Well, that may be one reason—Another is, that upon a nearer acquaintance with these gentlemen, the rays of glory and honour that appear at a distance to invest them, totally disappear. They are just like old worsted stockings in a frosty night—Draw near, and the splendour is gone !

OLEARIUS.

It seems you are placed here to tell pleasant truths.

LIEBTRAUT.

When I can discover them, my mouth seldom fails to utter them.

OLEARIUS.

Yet you hardly seem to distinguish manner and place.

LIEBTRAUT.

There is no matter where you place a cupping-glass, provided it draws blood.

OLEA.

OLEARIUS.

Buffoons are privileged, and we know them by their scurvy jests—But in future let me advise you to bear the badge of your order—a cap and bells!

LIEBTRAUT.

A cap!—True—should I take a fancy to have one, will you direct me to the place where you bought yours?

BISHOP.

Some other subject—Not so warm, gentlemen! At table all should be fair and quiet—Choose another subject, Liebtraut.

LIEBTRAUT.

Near Frankfort is an ample building called the correction-house——

OLEARIUS.

What of the Turkish expedition, please your Excellence?

BISHOP.

The Emperor has it much at heart to restore peace to the empire, stop feuds, and secure the rigid administration of justice: then, according to report, he goes in person against the Turk.—At present domestic dissensions find him enough to do; and the empire, spite of four years of external peace, is one scene of murder. Franconia, Swabia, the Upper Rhine, and the surrounding countries are laid waste

waste by presumptuous and restless knights—And here, Seckingen, Selbifs with one leg, and Goetz with the iron hand, sport with the Imperial mandates.

ABBOT.

If his Majesty does not exert himself, these fellows will carry us off in their portmanteaus.

LIEBTRAUT.

He would be a sturdy fellow indeed who should carry off the wine-butt of Fulda in a portmanteau!

BISHOP.

Besides, the last has been for many years my mortal foe, and molests me hourly—But it will not last long, I hope. The Emperor holds his court at Augsburg—we have taken our measures.—Doctor, do you know Adelbert of Weislingen?

OLEARIUS.

No, please your Eminence.

BISHOP.

If you stay till his arrival, you will have the pleasure of seeing a most noble, most accomplished, and most gallant knight.

OLEARIUS.

He must be excellent indeed who deserves such praises from such a mouth.

LIEBTRAUT.

And he was bred at no university.

BISHOP.

BISHOP.

We know that—[*The attendants throng to the window.*] What's the matter?

ATTENDANT.

Just now, Farber, Weßlingen's servant, rode in at the Castle-gate.

BISHOP.

See what he brings. He will announce his master.

[*Exit Liebtraut—They stand up and drink round.*]

Liebtraut re-enters.

BISHOP.

What news?

LIEBTRAUT.

I wish it had been told by another—Weßlingen is a prisoner!

BISHOP.

How?

LIEBTRAUT.

Berlichingen seized him and three attendants near Haslach—One is escaped to tell you.

ABBOT.

A Job's messenger!

OLEARIUS.

I grieve from my heart.

BISHOP.

I will see the servant—Bring him up—I will
speak

Speak with him myself. Conduct him into my cabinet.

[*Exit Bishop.*]

ABBOT [*Sitting down*].

Another draught, however.

[*The Servants fill round.*]

OLEARIUS.

Does your Reverence not think of a turn in the garden? "Post cœnam stabis, seu passus mille meabis."

LIEBTRAUT.

In truth, sitting is unhealthy for you, who are threatened with an apoplexy—[*The Abbot rises.*]
Can I but once get these grave ones out of doors, I shall exercise their tempers a little!

SCENE *changes to Jaxthausen.*

Maria, Weisligen.

MARIA.

You love me, you say—Alas! I am perhaps but too much inclined to believe it.

WEISLINGEN.

Why not believe what I feel so well, that I am entirely thine!—[*Embraces her.*]

MARIA.

Softly!—I gave you one kiss for earnest, but you must encroach no further.

WEISLIN-

WEISLINGEN.

You are too strict, Maria!—Innocent love is pleasing in the sight of Heaven.

MARIA.

It may be so—But I must not build upon what you say; for I have been taught that caresses are as strong as fetters, and that damsels when they love are weaker than Sampson when he lost his locks.

WEISLINGEN.

Who taught you so?

MARIA.

The abbess of my convent. Till my seventeenth year I was with her—and only with you for the first time have I ceased to regret her company. She had loved, and could tell She had a most affectionate heart—Oh! she was an excellent woman!

WEISLINGEN.

Then you resemble her—[*Takes her hand.*]
What would become of me were I to lose you?

MARIA.

That, I hope, is not likely to happen—But you must away.

WEISLINGEN.

I know it, dearest! and I will—Well do I feel what a treasure I have purchased by this sacrifice!—Now, blessed be your brother, and the day on which he undertook to seize me!

E

MARIA.

MARIA.

His heart overflowed with hope for you and himself. Farewell! he said, I go to recover my friend.

WEISLINGEN.

That has he done. Would that I had studied the arrangement and security of my property, instead of neglecting it, and dallying at that worthless Court!—then couldst thou have been instantly mine.

MARIA.

Delay enhances pleasure.

WEISLINGEN.

Say not so, Maria, lest I dread that thy feelings are less keen than mine.—True, I deserved punishment, deserved to lose every glimpse of this heavenly prospect—But now! to be wholly thine, to live only in thee and in thy circle of friends—far removed from the world, to live for the enjoyment of all the raptures which two hearts can bestow—What is the favour of princes, what applauses of the universe, to such simple yet unequalled felicity?—Many have been my hopes and wishes; henceforth I am equally above both.

Enter Goetz.

GOETZ.

Your page is returned already. He can scarcely bring out a word for hunger and fatigue—My wife
has

has ordered the poor knave to be taken care of. This much I have picked out—the Bishop will not give up my boy—an Imperial commission is to be granted, under which all matters are to be adjusted. But be it as he will, Adelbert, you are free:—Pledge me but your hand, that you will neither give open nor under-hand assistance to my avowed enemies.

WEISLINGEN.

Here I grasp thy hand. From this moment be our union and friendship as firm and unalterable as a primary law of nature!—Let me take this hand also [*Takes Maria's hand*—and with it the possession of this lovely lady.

GOETZ.

Dare I promise for you?

MARIA. [*Timidly.*]

If—if it is your wish

GOETZ.

By good luck our wishes will not differ on this point.—Thou need'st not blush—the glance of thy eye betrays thee. Well then, Weislingen, join hands, and I say *Amen*!—My friend and brother!—I thank thee, Sister; thou spin'st more than flax, for thou hast drawn a thread which can fetter this wandering bird of Paradise. Yet thou look'st not quite open, Adelbert—What ails thee? *I* am fully happy! What *I* but hoped in a dream, *I* now see with my eyes, and feel as if *I* still dreamed. Now my

vision is out—I thought to-night, that, in token of reconciliation, I gave thee this iron hand; and that you held it so fast that it broke away from my arm:—I started, and awoke. Had I but dreamed a little longer, I should have seen how thou didst make me a new living hand.—You must away this instant, to put in order thy castle and property. That damn'd Court has detained you long from both.—I must call my wife—Elizabeth!

MARIA.

How transported is my brother!

WEISLINGEN.

Yet I am still more so.

GOETZ. [*To Maria.*]

You will have pleasant quarters.

MARIA.

They say Franconia is a fine country.

WEISLINGEN.

And I may venture to say that my castle lies in the most delicious part of it.

GOETZ.

That thou mayst, and I will swear to it—Look you, here flows the Mayne, around a hill clothed with corn-fields and vineyards, its top crowned with a Gothic castle—then the river makes a sharp turn, and glides round behind the very rock on which it stands. The windows of the great hall
look

look perpendicularly down upon the river—a prospect which would detain one for hours.

Enter Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH.

What would'st thou?

GOETZ.

You too must give your hand, and say God bleſs you!—They are a pair.

ELIZABETH.

So ſoon?

GOETZ.

But not unexpected.

ELIZABETH.

May ye ever love each other with the ſame affection as now—and as your love, ſo be your happineſs!

WEISLINGEN.

Amen! On that condition I enſure it.

GOETZ.

The bridegroom, my dear, muſt perforce away for awhile; for this great event makes it needful for him to ſettle ſome concerns at home. He muſt bid adieu to the Biſhop's Court, in order that that connection may be broken off by degrees—Then he muſt reſcue his property from the hands of ſome ſelfiſh ſtewards—and——But come, Siſter—come Eliza-

E 3

beth,

beth, his squire has perhaps some private message to him.

WEISLINGEN.

None but what you may hear.

GOETZ.

Needless :—Franconians and Swabians ! now that you are one of us, we may bid their Mightinesses the princes defiance to their beard.

[*Exeunt Goetz, Elizabeth, Maria.*]

WEISLINGEN [*alone*].

God in Heaven !—and canst thou have reserved such happiness for one so unworthy ?—It is too much for my heart. How meanly I depended upon wretched fools, whom I thought I was governing by superiority of intrigue, subservient to the glance of homage-demanding princes !—Goetz, my faithful Goetz, thou hast restored me to myself—and my beloved Maria has completed my reformation. I feel free, as if brought from a dungeon into the open air.—Bamberg will I never more see—will snap all the shameful bands that have connected it and me. My heart rejoices, never more to undergo the degradation of struggling for boons that may be refused—He alone is great and happy who fills his own station of independence, and has neither to command nor to obey.

Enter

Enter Francis.

FRANCIS.

God greet you, noble Sir! I bring you so many salutations, that I know not with which to begin—Bamberg, and ten miles around, bid God greet you!

WEISLINGEN.

Welcome, Francis! Bring'st thou aught else?

FRANCIS.

You are in such consideration at Court that it cannot be expressed.

WEISLINGEN.

That will not last long.

FRANCIS.

As long as you live—and after your death it will shine more lasting than the marble inscription upon your monument.—How they took your misfortune to heart!

WEISLINGEN.

And what said the Bishop?

FRANCIS.

His ardent curiosity poured out question upon question without giving me time to answer. He knew your accident already; for Farber, who galloped from Haflach, had brought him the tidings—But he would hear every particular—He asked so anxiously whether you were not wounded—I told

him you were safe, from the hair of your scalp to the nail of your toe.

WEISLINGEN.

And what said he to the treaty?

FRANCIS.

He would have given up the page and a ransom to boot for your liberty. But he heard you were to be dismissed upon your parole, otherwise he had granted to Berlichingen all he could ask. He charged me with a thousand messages to you—more than I can ever utter.—O how he harangued! and concluded, “I cannot live without Weislingen!”

WEISLINGEN.

He must learn.

FRANCIS.

What mean ye?—He bids you hasten to him—All the Court expects you.

WEISLINGEN.

Let them expect on—The Court will I never, never again see.

FRANCIS.

Not see the Court!—My gracious Lord, how comes that? Did you know what I know—could you but dream what I have seen—

WEISLINGEN.

What may it be?

FRANCIS.

The bare recital would put me mad.—Bamberg
is

is no longer Bamberg—An angel of Heaven, in semblance of woman, has taken her abode in it, and it is become Paradise.

WEISLINGEN.

No more than that?

FRANCIS.

May I become a shaven friar, if the bare glimpse of her does not drive you frantic!

WEISLINGEN.

Who is it, then?

FRANCIS.

Adela von Walldorf.

WEISLINGEN.

She!—I have heard much of her beauty.

FRANCIS.

Heard!—As well might you say I have *seen* music. So far is the tongue from being able to rehearse the slightest article of her beauty, that the very eye which beholds her cannot drink it all in.

WEISLINGEN.

You are mad.

FRANCIS.

That may well be. The last time I was in her company I had no more sense than if I had been drunk;—or, I may rather say, I felt at that moment like a glorified faint enjoying the angelic vision!—All my senses exalted, and more lively than ever—yet not one at their owner's command.

WEISLINGEN.

Enthusiast !

FRANCIS.

As I took leave of the Bishop, she sat by him—they played at chess—He was very gracious—gave me his hand to kiss, and said much, of which I understood never a syllable. As I looked on his fair antagonist, her eye was fixed upon the board, as if meditating a grand stroke—Traces of attentive intelligence around the mouth and cheek—I could have wished to be the ivory king—The mixture of dignity and feeling on the brow—and the dazzling lustre of her neck and breast over-shaded by her raven ringlets—

WEISLINGEN.

Thou art become a poet upon the subject.

FRANCIS.

I felt at the moment the inspiration of a bard—my whole faculties were concentrated in one object. As the Bishop ended and I made my obeisance, she looked up and said, "Carry your master the best wishes of an unknown. He must not despise them, though he is already so rich in old friends."—I would have answered somewhat, but the passage betwixt my heart and my tongue was choked. I would have given my whole revenue for permission to touch but one of her fingers! As I stood thus, the Bishop threw down a pawn, and in stooping

stooping to lift it, I kissed the hem of her garment.
Transport thrill'd through my limbs, and I scarce
know how I left the room.

WEISLINGEN.

Is her husband at Court?

FRANCIS.

She has been a widow these four months, and is
at the Court of Bamberg to divert her melancholy.
You will see her—and to see her is to stand in the
fun of spring!

WEISLINGEN.

She would make little impression on me.

FRANCIS.

I hear you are as good as married.

WEISLINGEN.

Would I were really so! My gentle Maria will
be the happiness of my life. The sweetness of her
soul beams through her mild blue eyes—and, like
an angel composed of innocence and love, she
guides me to the paths of peace and felicity!—
Pack up—and then to my Castle—Never will I be-
hold Bamberg, should St. Bede come to guide me
in person. *[Exit Weislingen.]*

FRANCIS *[alone]*.

God forbid!—But let me hope the best. Maria
is beautiful and amiable, and I can excuse a prisoner

and an invalid for loving her. In her eye is compassion, and a melancholy sympathy—But in thine, Adela, is life—fire—spirit——Would to—I am a fool—Such has one glance made me. My master must hence—I too must hence, and either recover my senses, or gaze them quite away.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

A C T II.

*Bamberg.**A Hall in the Bishop's Palace.**The Bishop, Adela, Liebtraut, Ladies and Courtiers
discovered.*

BISHOP.

HE will not return, they say.

ADELA.

I beseech you, put him out of your head.

BISHOP.

What can it mean?

LIEBTRAUT.

Poh! The message has been repeated to him
like a Pater-noster. He has taken a fit of obsti-
nacy; but I think I could soon cure him.

BISHOP.

Do so—Ride to him instantly.

LIEBTRAUT.

My commission—

BISHOP.

BISHOP.

Shall be instantly made out. Spare nothing to bring him back.

LIEBTRAUT.

May I venture to use your name, gracious lady?

ADELA.

Aye, with all manner of propriety.

LIEBTRAUT.

Know you that's a wide commission?

ADELA.

Know you not my rank and sex sufficiently to understand in what tone I am to be spoken of to an unknown nobleman?

LIEBTRAUT.

In the tone of a speaking trumpet, think I.

ADELA.

You will always be a madcap.

BISHOP.

Well, well, take the best horse in my stable—choose your own servants, and bring him hither.

LIEBTRAUT.

If I do not, say that an old woman who deals in curing warts and freckles knows more of sympathy than I.

BISHOP.

Yet, what will it avail? Goetz has wholly gained him—He will be no sooner here than he will wish to return.

LIEB-

LIEBTRAUT.

He will wish it, doubtless; but can he do it?
The squeeze of the hand from a prince, and the
smiles of a beauty—from these could no Weislingen
ever escape.—I have the honour to take my leave.

BISHOP.

A good journey!

ADELA.

Adieu!

[Exit Liebtraut.]

BISHOP.

When he is once here, I must trust to you.

ADELA.

Would you make me your lime-twig?

BISHOP.

By no means.

ADELA.

Your decoy-duck then?

BISHOP.

No—that part plays Liebtraut. I beseech you
do not refuse to do what no other can.

ADELA.

I will not.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE

SCENE *changes to Jaxthausen.*

A Hall in Goetz's Castle.

Enter Goetz and Hans von Selbiss.

SELBISS.

Every one will applaud you for denouncing feud
against the Nurembergers.

GOETZ.

It would have been a thorn in my very heart had
I remained long their debtor. It is clear that they
betrayed my page to the Bishop—They shall have
cause to remember me.

SELBISS.

They have an old grudge at you.

GOETZ.

And I at them. I am glad they have begun the
fray.

SELBISS.

These free towns ever hold part with the priests.

GOETZ.

Aye, truly do they !

SELBISS.

But we will make hell hot for them !

GOETZ.

I wish the Burgomaster, with his gold chain,
would

would come to take a peep at us—He would stare his wits away!

SELBISS.

I hear Weislingen is one of us—Does he really join in our league?

GOETZ.

Not immediately—There are some reasons which prevent his instantly giving us assistance; but it is quite enough that he is not against us. The priest without him is what the mass would be without the priest!

SELBISS.

When do we set forward?

GOETZ.

To-morrow or next day. There are merchants coming from Bamberg and Nuremberg to the fair at Frankfort—We may strike a good blow.

SELBISS.

So be it, in God's name!

SCENE *returns to the Bishop's Palace at Bamberg.*

Adela and her Waiting-maid.

ADELA.

He is here, sayest thou? I can scarce believe it.

MAID.

Had I not seen him myself, I should have doubted it.

F

ADELA.

ADELA.

Then Liebtraut may coin the Bishop into gold
for such a master-piece of skill.

MAID.

I saw him as he was about to enter the Palace—
he rode a grey—The horse started when he came on
the bridge, and would not move forward—The po-
pulace thronged up the street to see him—They
rejoiced at the delay of the unruly horse—He was
greeted on all sides, and he thanked them gracefully
all round. He sate the curvetting steed with an
easy indifference, and betwixt threats and soothing
brought him to the gate, followed by Liebtraut and
a few servants.

ADELA.

How did he please thee ?

MAID.

Never man so much—He is as like that por-
trait of the Emperor, as if he were his son. [*Point-
ing to a picture.*] The nose somewhat less—but
just such kindly light-brown eyes, and such fine
light hair, curled like a boy's—A half melancholy
impression on his face—I know not how—but he
pleased me so well—

ADELA.

I am curious to see him.

MAID.

There were a Lord for you !

ADELA.

ADELA.

You little fool!

MAID.

Fools and children speak truth, quoth the proverb.

Enter Liebtraut.

LIEBTRAUT.

Now, madam, what do I deserve?

ADELA.

Horns from your wife!—for, from the description I hear, you have endangered the honour of many a family.

LIEBTRAUT.

Not so, gracious lady—you yourself will insure their tranquillity.

ADELA.

How did you contrive to bring him?

LIEBTRAUT.

You know well enough how they catch woodcocks—and why should I detail my little stratagems to you?—First, I pretended not to have heard a word of his design of retirement, and put him upon telling me the whole story at length—Then I saw the matter quite in a different light—Could not find—could not see, and so forth—Then I spoke of Bamberg, and carelessly recalled to his memory old connections; knitted together many a broken association of ideas. He knew not what to say—

felt a new attraction to Bamberg, but durst not give way to it. When I found him begin to waver, and saw him too much occupied with his own feelings to suspect my sincerity, I threw the halter over his head, and by the triple bond of beauty, court-favour, and flattery, dragged him in triumph hither.

ADELA.

What said you of me?

LIEBTRAUT.

The mere truth—Said you were apprehensive about your property, and had hoped in his interest with the Emperor for its security.

ADELA.

'Tis well.

LIEBTRAUT.

The Bishop will introduce him to you.

ADELA.

I expect them—[*Exit Liebtraut.*] And with such feelings have I seldom expected a visit.

SCENE changes to Speffart, the Castle of Selbifs.

Enter Selbifs, Goetz, and George in the armour and drefs of a Cavalier.

GOETZ.

—So, thou didst not find him, George?

GEORGE.

GEORGE.

He had ridden to Bamberg the day before with Liebtraut and two servants.

GOETZ.

I cannot see the reason of that.

SELBISS.

I see it well—Your reconciliation was too speedy to be lasting—Liebtraut is a cunning fellow, and has inveigled him over.

GOETZ.

Think’st thou he would become a turncoat?

SELBISS.

The first step is taken.

GOETZ.

I will never believe it. Who knows what he may have to do at Court—his affairs are unarranged. Let us hope the best.

SELBISS.

Would to God he may deserve your good opinion, and *do* the best!

GOETZ.

A thought strikes me!—George shall to Bamberg, disguised in the spoils of the Bamberg trooper, and force the fellow to give him the password—He may then ride to the town and see how matters stand.

GEORGE.

I have long wished to see Bamberg.

F 3

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

It is thy first expedition. Take care, my boy ;
I should be sorry if ill-luck attended it.

GEORGE.

Never fear—I shall not go wrong, were fifty of
them to gabble about me. [*Exit George.*]

SCENE *returns to the Bishop's Palace. His Cabinet.*

The Bishop and Weislingen.

BISHOP.

Then thou wilt stay no longer ?

WEISLINGEN.

You would not wish me to break my oath.

BISHOP.

I could wish indeed thou hadst not sworn to
them. But what evil spirit possesses thee ?—Can I
not procure thee a release from that oath ? Is my
credit so trifling at the Imperial and Roman Courts ?

WEISLINGEN.

The thing is done !—excuse it as you can.

BISHOP.

I cannot comprehend where there was the least
necessity for taking such a step—Were there not a
thousand other ways of procuring thy freedom ?—
Had we not his page ? And would I not have given
gold enough to boot ? Our operations against him
and

and his confederates had gone so far——But, alas !
I do not reflect that I talk to his friend, who has
joined him against me, and can easily counterwork
the mines he himself has dug.

WEISLINGEN.

Gracious my Lord

BISHOP.

And yet, when I again look on thy face, again
hear thy voice—it is impossible—impossible !

WEISLINGEN.

Farewell, good my Lord !

BISHOP.

I give thee my blessing—Formerly when we
parted, I was wont to say “Till we meet again!”—
Now—would to God we part for ever !

WEISLINGEN.

It cannot be otherwise.

BISHOP.

Perhaps I may next see thee as an enemy before
my walls, carrying havoc through the fertile plains
of which till now thou hast been the protector !

WEISLINGEN.

Never, my gracious Lord !

BISHOP.

You cannot say so. My temporal neighbours
have long had a grudge at me—but while thou

wert mine——Go then, Weislingen!—I have no more to say—Thou hast undone much—Go—

WEISLINGEN.

I know not what to answer. *[Exit Bishop.]*

Enter Francis.

FRANCIS.

The Lady Adela expects you. She is not well—but she will not let you go without bidding her farewell.

WEISLINGEN.

Come.

FRANCIS.

Do we go then for certain?

WEISLINGEN.

This very night.

FRANCIS.

I feel as if I were to leave the world—

WEISLINGEN.

And I—yet I—yet I know not wherefore.

SCENE *changes to Adela's apartment.*

Adela and Waiting-maid.

MAID.

You are pale, gracious Lady!

ADELA.

I love him not, yet I would wish him to stay—
Seest

Seest thou, I may wish his company, yet dislike him
for my husband.

MAID.

Does your Ladyship think he will go?

ADELA.

He has bid the Bishop farewell.

MAID.

He has yet a severe struggle to make.

ADELA.

What meanest thou?

MAID.

Gracious Lady, the barb'd hook is in his heart—
ere he tear it away, he must bleed.

Enter Weislingen.

WEISLINGEN.

You are not well, gracious Lady!

ADELA.

That is indifferent to you—You leave us, leave
us for ever: why do you ask whether we live or
die?

WEISLINGEN.

You do not know me.

ADELA.

I judge you by your actions.

WEISLINGEN.

Appearances are deceitful.

ADELA.

ADELA.

Then are you a carteleon.

WEISLINGEN.

Could you see my heart—

ADELA.

I should see fine things there.

WEISLINGEN.

Surely!—Your own image—

ADELA.

Thrust into some corner, like an old family-picture! I beseech you, Weislingen, consider with whom you speak—Fair words are a foul insult when they are belied by actions—A discovered masquerader plays but a pitiful part. Your deeds tell us how to think of you.

WEISLINGEN.

Be it as you will—I am so agonised at reflecting on what I am, that I little reckon what the world thinks me.

ADELA.

You came to take farewell.

WEISLINGEN.

Permit me to kiss your hand, and I will say adieu!—You clear up—I did not think—But I am troublesome—

ADELA.

I only wished to assist your resolution.—Then you will away?

WEISLINGEN.

O say rather, I *must*. Am I not compelled by my knightly word—my solemn engagement?

ADELA.

Go! go! Talk of that to some forsaken dam-fel whose Corydon has proved forsworn.—Knightly word!—Nonsense!

WEISLINGEN.

You do not think so?

ADELA.

On my honour, you deceive yourself. What have you promised? and to whom? You have pledged your alliance to a traitor to the Emperor, at the very moment when he incurred the ban of the Empire for kidnapping you upon the Imperial high-road. Such an agreement is no more binding than an extorted unjust oath. Every child knows what faith is to be kept with robbers—And there is more behind—By this oath you are to become an enemy to the peace of the Empire—a disturber of domestic happiness and tranquillity—a rebel to the Emperor—the associate of robbers and marauders—of Goetz of Berlichingen, Frank of Seckingen, and Hans of Selbifs; men with hearts hard as the steel of their blades—With these free-booters canst thou have aught in common?—thou, Weislingen, with thy gentle temper!

WEISLINGEN.

Did but you know them—

ADELA.

ADELA.

I would Justice knew that Goetz. He has a high domineering soul—and woe to thee therefore, Weislingen!—Go, and try to be his companion—Go, and receive his commands:—Thou art mild, gentle—

WEISLINGEN.

And he too—

ADELA.

But you are yielding, and he stubborn. Soon will he drive thee from thy own opinion. Thou wilt become the slave of a marauding baron; thou that mayst command princes!—'Twere a pity to dissuade you from so glorious a situation.

WEISLINGEN.

Did you but know how kindly he received me—

ADELA.

Gentle soul!—Think you so much of that? It was his duty as a knight—And what would he have gained by acting otherwise—or what wouldst thou have lost?—You would have been but the more welcome here. An overbearing man like—

WEISLINGEN.

You speak of your enemy.

ADELA.

I speak for your freedom; yet I know not why I should take interest in it—Farewell!

WEISLIN-

WEISLINGEN.

Permit me but—a moment—*[Takes her hand.*
A pause.]

ADELA.

Have you aught to say?

WEISLINGEN.

I must hence.

ADELA.

Then go—

WEISLINGEN.

Gracious lady, I cannot.

ADELA.

You must.

WEISLINGEN.

Must this be the last—

ADELA.

I am ill—very unable to—

WEISLINGEN.

Look not on me thus!

ADELA.

Thou art our enemy—Should we smile at thee?

WEISLINGEN.

Adela!

Enter Francis.

FRANCIS.

Noble Sir, the Bishop inquires for you.

ADELA.

Go! go!

FRANCIS.

FRANCIS.

He begs you to come instantly.

ADELA.

Be gone ! be gone !

WEISLINGEN.

I do not say adieu : I shall see you again.

[Exeunt Weislingen and Francis.]

ADELA.

Me again ? We must provide for that. Margaret, when he comes, refuse him admittance. Say I am ill—have a head-ache—sleep—any thing. This detains him, or nothing. *[Exeunt.]*

A pause. Re-enter Weislingen and Francis.

WEISLINGEN.

She will not see me !

FRANCIS.

Night draws on ; shall we saddle ?

WEISLINGEN.

She will not see me !

FRANCIS.

Are you pleased to want the horses ?

WEISLINGEN.

It is too late ; we stay here.

FRANCIS.

God be praised !

[Exit.]

WEISLIN-

WEISLINGEN [*alone*].

Thou dost stay!—Be on thy guard—the risque is infinite. My horse started at the entrance of the Palace-gate—It was my good angel stood before him—he knew the dangers I was hurrying to meet. Yet it would be unjust to leave in confusion the affairs entrusted to me by the Bishop, at least without arranging them, so that they may be understood by my successor. That I can do without breach of faith to Berlichingen and his league—and that done they shall not detain me.—Yet it would have been better that I had never come. But I will away to-morrow or next day—'Tis decided! [*Exit.*]

SCENE *changes to a Cottage.*

The Bridal of a Peasant.

The Bride's Father, Bride, Bridegroom, and other Country-folks, Goetz of Berlichingen, and Hans of Selbifs all discovered at table. Troopers, Cavaliers, and Peasants attend.

GOETZ.

It was a good fancy to make up your law-suit by a merry bridal.

BRIDE'S FATHER.

Better than ever I could have dreamed of, noble Sir—to spend my days peaceably and quietly with
my

my neighbour, and my daughter to look after me.

BRIDEGROOM.

And I to get the bone of contention and a pretty wife into the bargain! Aye, the prettiest in the whole village. Would to God we had consulted your Honour sooner.

GOETZ.

How long have you been at law?

BRIDE'S FATHER.

About eight years—For these periwig'd gentry never give a decision, unless you can tear it out of their very heart. The Devil fly away with the Assessor Sapupi for a damn'd swarthy Italian!

BRIDEGROOM.

Yes, he's a pretty fellow; I was before him twice.

BRIDE'S FATHER.

I thrice—and it cost me many a fair guilder.

GOETZ.

Come, Good luck to the bride! [*Drinks.*]

BRIDE'S FATHER.

Amen!—Aye, the Assessor alone pick'd from me eighteen gold guilders. God curse him!

BRIDEGROOM.

Who?

BRIDE'S FATHER.

Why, who else but Sapupi?

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

The judge!—That is infamous.

BRIDE'S FATHER.

He asked twenty: and there had I to pay them in his fine country house. I thought my heart would have broken with anxiety. For, look you, my Lord, I am well enough off with my house and little farm, but how could I raise the ready cash? He did not even leave me a single gold cross to carry me on my journey—At last I took courage and told him my case: when he saw I was desperate, he thrust me from him, and pushed me out of doors.

BRIDEGROOM.

Impossible!—Sapupi!

BRIDE'S FATHER.

Aye, just he; what do you start at?

BRIDEGROOM.

The devil! He took fifteen guelders from me too!

BRIDE'S FATHER.

Curse him!

SELBISS.

They call us robbers, Goetz!

BRIDE'S FATHER.

Bribed on both sides!—That delayed the judgment—Oh! the scoundrel!

GOETZ.

This must not be unavenged.

G

BRIDE'S

BRIDE'S FATHER.

What can we do?

GOETZ.

Why—go to Spurs, where there is an Imperial visitation: make your complaint; they must listen to it, and help you to your own again.

BRIDEGROOM.

Does your Honour think we shall succeed?

GOETZ.

I could promise you more surely if I had him by the ears.

SELBISS.

The fun is worth the journey.

GOETZ.

Aye; many is the day I have ridden out for the fourth part of it.

BRIDE'S FATHER. [*To Bridegroom.*]

What think'st thou?

BRIDEGROOM.

We'll try, go as it may.

Enter a Cavalier.

CAVALIER.

The Nurembergers are set out.

GOETZ.

Whereabout are they by this time?

CAVA-

CAVALIER.

If we ride sharply we shall just catch them in the wood betwixt Burheim and Muhlbach.

SELBISS.

Excellent!

GOETZ.

Well, my children, God blefs you, and help every man to his own!

BRIDE'S FATHER.

Thanks, gallant Sir! Will you not pass the night here?

GOETZ.

It may not be. Adieu!

[*Exeunt Goetz, Selbiss, and soldiers.*]

SCENE *returns to a Hall in the Bishop's Palace at Bamberg.*

Adela and Weislingen discovered.

ADELA.

Time begins to hang inexpressibly heavy here. I dare not speak seriously, and I am ashamed to trifle with you—Ennui is worse a hundred times than a slow fever.

WEISLINGEN.

Tired of me already!

ADELA.

Not so much of you as of your irresolution. I

G 2

would

would you were where you wished to go, and that we had not detained you!

WEISLINGEN.

Such is your sex:—First they cherish with maternal care our infant hopes—then, like the stupid ostrich, leave them to destruction.

ADELA.

You rail at women, as the losing gambler tears and curses the harmless cards which have been the instruments of his loss: But let me tell you something about *men*—What are you that talk of fickleness? You that are seldom even what you would wish to be, never what you should be. Holiday princes!—the envy of those who see but your outside. O what would a tailor's wife give for a necklace of the pearls on the skirt of your frock!

WEISLINGEN.

You are severe.

ADELA.

It is but the antistrophe to your satire. Ere I knew you, Weislingen, I felt something like the poor tailor's wife—Hundred-tongued rumour, to speak without a figure, had exerted so many mouths in your praise, that I was tempted to think—O that I could but see this quintessence of manhood, this phoenix, Weislingen!—I had my wish—

WEISLINGEN.

And found the phoenix a common bird.

ADELA.

ADELA.

No, Weislingen, I took an interest in you—

WEISLINGEN.

So it appears.

ADELA.

So it *was*—for you really surpassed your reputation. The multitude prize only the show of worth; but I do not examine so superficially as the multitude those whom I esteem—After some time's acquaintance, something, I knew not what, was missing about you; at length my eyes were opened—I saw the energetic being never dead to the thoughts of fame—that being who was wont to pile princely project on project, till, like the mountains of the giants, they reached the clouds, I saw him at once become as querulous as a sick poet, as melancholy as a forsaken damsel, and as moody as an old bachelor. At length I supposed something of importance lay at your heart, and excused you as well as I could; but now, that from day to day it becomes worse, we must really break off our treaty; I hope you will find a companion for life better able to bear with you.

WEISLINGEN.

Dismiss me, then.

ADELA.

Not till all chance of your recovery is lost—Solitude is fatal in your distemper—Alas! poor soul!

G 3

you

you need as much petting as one that has lost his first true love—and yet I won't give you up—Give me your hand, and pardon what my affection has dictated.

WEISLINGEN.

Could'st thou but love me, could'st thou but return the fervour of my passion with the least glow of sympathy—Adela, thy reproaches are very unjust. Could'st thou but guess the hundredth part of my sufferings, you would not treat me with mockery, indifference, and contempt—thou would'st not torture me in every way so cruelly—You smile—To be satisfied with myself after the step I have taken, must be the work of more than one day—To plot against him who is yet warm in my affection—

ADELA.

Strange being!—To love him against whom you plot, is to send provisions to an enemy.

WEISLINGEN.

I well know there needs no dallying. He now knows that I am again Weislingen; and he is not a man to brook what I have done. Besides, Adela, we are not so sluggish as you think. Our forces are hardy and watchful, our schemes are going forwards, and the diet of Augsbuurg will, I hope, bring them to a favourable issue.

ADELA.

You go there?

WEISLINGEN.

WEISLINGEN.

If I could carry a glimpse of hope with me !

[*Kisses her hand.*]

ADELA.

Ah ! infidel !—Always signs and wonders required. Go, Weislingen, and accomplish the great work ! The interest of the Bishop, yours, mine, are all so wrapped together, that were it but policy—

WEISLINGEN.

You jest.

ADELA.

I do not jest. The haughty Duke has seized my property—Yours will not long escape Goetz ; and if we do not unite together, and sway the Emperor to our side, we are lost.

WEISLINGEN.

I fear nothing. The greater part of the Princes are on our side—the Emperor needs assistance against the Turks, and is therefore willing to favour us. What rapture for me to rescue your fortune from rapacious invaders—to crush the mutinous chivalry of Swabia—to restore peace to the bishopric, and then !—

ADELA.

One day brings on another, and Fate is mistress of the future.

WEISLINGEN.

But we must lend our good will.

G 4

ADELA.

ADELA.

We do so.

WEISLINGEN.

But seriously.

ADELA.

Well then seriously—Do but go—

WEISLINGEN.

Enchantress!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE *changes to Speffart.*

Enter Goetz, Selbiss, and George.

SELBISS.

You see it is as I prophesied.

GOETZ.

No, no, no.

GEORGE.

I tell you truth, believe me. I did as you directed, and with the dress and pass-word, escorted some peasants of the Lower Rhine to Bamberg, who paid my expences for my convoy as a trooper of the Bishop.

SELBISS.

In that disguise? It might have cost thee dear.

GEORGE.

So I thought afterwards. But a trooper who thinks too much before hand will never make a bold stroke. I came to Bamberg, and in the very
inn

inn I heard them tell how the Bishop and Weislingen were friends again, and how Weislingen was to marry the widow of Walldorf.

GOETZ.

Hearsay !

GEORGE.

I saw her as she rose from table. She is lovely, by my faith, lovely ! He was with her. We all bowed—she thanked us all—He nodded, and seemed so pleased—They passed forwards, and every body cried, What a handsome pair !

GOETZ.

That may be.

GEORGE.

Listen farther :—The next day he went to mass—I threw myself in his way ; he was attended by only one squire ; I stood at the steps, and whispered to him as he passed, “Two words from your friend Berlichingen.” He started—I marked the consciousness of guilt in his face. He had scarcely the heart to look upon me—me, a poor horseboy !

SELBISS.

His conscience is more degrading than thy situation.

GEORGE.

“Art thou of Bamberg ?” said he.—“I bring a message from the Knight of Berlichingen,” said I, “and am to enquire—”——“Come to my apartment

ment to-morrow early," quoth he, "and we will speak further."

GOETZ.

And you went—

GEORGE.

Yes, truly, I went, and waited in his antichamber long—long—and his filken-jacketed pages flouted me on all hands. Flout on, thought I, if I had you—At length I was introduced. He seemed displeased—But what cared I?—I discharged my errand. When he had heard me out, he put on just such an angry blustering look as a coward that wants to look brave. He wondered most dreadfully that you should send a message to him by a horse-boy. That piqued me. "There are but two sorts of people," said I, "the gallant and the base—and I serve Goetz of Berlichingen." Then he began, took every thing wrong; said, that you had hurried his motions, that he owed you no allegiance, and would have nothing to do with you.

GOETZ.

Hadst thou that from his own mouth?

GEORGE.

That, and yet more—He threatened me—

GOETZ.

It is enough. He is lost for ever. Confidence
and

and credulity have again blinded me. Poor Mary !
how shall I tell this to thee ?

SELBISS.

I would rather have lost my other leg than have
been such a turn-coat.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT

A C T III.

The Imperial Garden at Augsburg.

Enter two Merchants of Nuremberg.

FIRST MERCHANT.

WE'LL stand here till the Emperor shall pass
—He is just coming up the long avenue.

SECOND MERCHANT.

Who is with him?

FIRST MERCHANT.

Adelbert von Weislingen.

SECOND MERCHANT.

The friend of the Bishop—That's lucky!

FIRST MERCHANT.

We'll prostrate ourselves, and I'll speak.

SECOND MERCHANT.

See! they come.

Enter the Emperor and Weislingen.

FIRST MERCHANT.

He looks displeased.

EMPEROR.

EMPEROR.

I want courage, Weislingen. When I review my past life, well may I be dismayed at the recollection of so many half—aye, and wholly ruined undertakings—and all because the pettiest feudatory of the empire prefers his own whims to its welfare.

[The Merchants throw themselves at his feet.]

FIRST MERCHANT.

Most mighty ! most gracious !

EMPEROR.

Who are ye ? what seek ye ?

FIRST MERCHANT.

Poor merchants, from your imperial city of Nuremberg :—Goetz von Berlichingen and Hans von Selbifs fell upon thirteen of us as we journeyed from the fair at Frankfort, under an escort from Bamberg—they overpowered and plundered us. We request your imperial assistance and redress, else must we beg our bread.

EMPEROR.

Sacred heaven ! what is this ?—The one has but one hand, the other but one leg—with two hands and two legs what would they have done !

FIRST MERCHANT.

We most humbly beseech your Majesty to look with compassion upon our unfortunate situation.

EMPEROR.

EMPEROR.

Thus it goes :—If a merchant loses a bag of pepper, all Germany must be in arms ; but when business occurs in which the Imperial Majesty is interested, should it concern dukedoms, principalities, or kingdoms, not a man must be disturbed.

WEISLINGEN.

You come at an unsuitable time. Go, and stay here for a few days.

MERCHANTS.

We recommend ourselves to your protection.

[Exeunt Merchants.]

EMPEROR.

Still new disturbances—They spring like the hydra's heads !

WEISLINGEN.

Which can only be checked by fire and sword.

EMPEROR.

Do you think so ?

WEISLINGEN.

Nothing can be more certain, since your Majesty and the Princes of the Empire have accommodated your other disputes. It is not the body of the State that complains of this malady—Franconia and Swabia only glow with the embers of civil discord ; and even there are many of the nobles and free barons that wish for quiet. Had we but once
crushed

crushed Seckingen, Selbifs—and—and—and Berlichingen, the others would fall afunder; for it is their spirit which enlivens the rest.

EMPEROR.

Fain would I excuse these knights—they are noble and hardy. Should I be engaged in war, they would follow me to the field.

WEISLINGEN.

It is to be wished they might know their duty—Though even in that case it would be dangerous to encourage their mutinous bravery by posts of trust: For it is the Imperial mercy and mildness that they so dreadfully abuse, upon which the hope and confidence of their league rests; and it cannot be quelled till we withdraw the encouragement of their presumption, and destroy their power before the eyes of the whole world.

EMPEROR.

You advise force, then?

WEISLINGEN.

I see no other means of quelling the spirit of insurrection which has spread itself abroad. And do we not hear the bitterest complaints from the nobles, that their vassals and bondsmen attach themselves to the side of these restless beings?—a practice which destroys all feudal subordination, and must produce the most fearful consequences.

EMPEROR.

EMPEROR.

I shall dispatch a strong force against Berlichingen and Selbifs; but I will not have them personally injured. Could they be seized prisoners, they should swear to renounce their feuds, and to remain in their own castles and territories upon their knightly parole. At the next session of the Diet we will propose this plan.

WEISLINGEN.

A general exclamation of assent and joy will spare your Majesty the trouble of particular detail.

SCENE *changes to Jaxthausen.*

Enter Goetz and Francis von Seckingen.

SECKINGEN.

Yes, my friend, I come to request the heart and hand of your fair sister.

GOETZ.

I would you had come sooner—Weislingen during his imprisonment obtained her affections, and I gave my consent. I let the bird loose—and he now despises the benevolent hand that fed him in his cage—He has flown to seek his mate God knows where!

SECKINGEN.

Is this so?

GOETZ.

As I tell you.

SECKIN-

SECKINGEN.

He has broken a double band. 'Tis well for you that you were not still more nearly connected with the traitor.

GOETZ.

Yonder sits the poor maiden, wasting her life in lamentation and prayer.

SECKINGEN.

I will comfort her.

GOETZ.

What! Would you think of marrying a forsaken—

SECKINGEN.

It is to the honours of both, that you have been betrayed by him. Should the poor girl be caged in a cloister, because the first man she knew proved a worthless renegade? Not so—I keep my purpose—She shall be empress of my castles and heart!

GOETZ.

I tell you he was not indifferent to her.

SECKINGEN.

Do you think I cannot efface the recollection of such a wretch?

[*Exeunt.*]

H

SCENE

SCENE changes to the Camp of the Party sent to execute the Imperial mandate.

Imperial Captain and Officers discovered.

CAPTAIN.

We must be cautious, and spare our people as much as possible. Besides, it is our strict orders to overpower and seize him alive. It will be difficult to obey—for who will match him hand to hand?

FIRST OFFICER.

'Tis true. And he will bear himself like a wild boar. Besides, in his whole life he has never injured any of us, so each will willingly leave to the others the honour of risking their legs and arms in behalf of the Emperor.

SECOND OFFICER.

'Twere shame to us should we not fight him. Had I him once by the ears, he should not easily shake himself clear.

FIRST OFFICER.

If his jaws had hold of you, they might chance to spoil your straight back. My gentle, young Sir Knight, such people don't fight like a coy wench!

SECOND OFFICER.

We shall see.

CAPTAIN.

CAPTAIN.

By this time he must have had our summons—
We must not dally. I mean to dispatch a troop to
seek him out.

SECOND OFFICER.

Let me lead it.

CAPTAIN.

You are unacquainted with the country.

SECOND OFFICER.

I have a servant who was born and bred here.

CAPTAIN.

I am glad to hear it—Forward!

SCENE *changes to Jaxtbausen.*

Seckingen alone.

SECKINGEN.

It goes to my wish! She looked at me from
head to foot, comparing me no doubt to her
gallant. Thank God I can stand the scrutiny!—
She answered little and confusedly, then with more
composure—O, it will do some day! A proposal
of marriage does not come amiss after such a cruel
disappointment.

Enter Goetz.

SECKINGEN.

How goes it, brother?

H 2

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

Ill:—Laid under the ban.

SECKINGEN.

How?

GOETZ.

There is the summons!—The Emperor has dispatched a party to give my body to the beasts of the earth and the fowls of heaven.

SECKINGEN.

They shall first furnish them with a dinner themselves—I am here in the very nick.

GOETZ.

No, Seckingen, you must leave me. Your great undertakings will be ruined should you become the enemy of the Emperor at so unseasonable a time. Besides, you can be of more use to me by remaining neuter. The worst that can happen is my being made prisoner; and then your timely good word with the Emperor, who esteems you, may rescue me out of the distress into which your untimely assistance will unremediably plunge us both. To what purpose should you do otherwise? The cry is against me; and could they say we were united, it would be only so much the louder. The Emperor pours forth this tide against me; and I should be utterly ruined, were it as easy to inspire courage into soldiers as to collect them into a body.

SECKIN-

SECKINGEN.

But I can privately fend you a score of troopers.

GOETZ.

Good!—I have already sent George to Selbifs, and to my people in the neighbourhood. My dear brother, when my forces are collected, they will be such a little troop as few princes can bring together.

SECKINGEN.

It will be small against the multitude.

GOETZ.

One wolf is too many for a whole flock of sheep.

SECKINGEN.

But if they have a good shepherd?

GOETZ.

Never fear!—They are mere hirelings; and even the best knight can do little if he has not his motions at his own command. It happened once to me, that, to oblige the Palsgrave, I went to serve against Conrad Schotten; then they presented me with a paper of instructions from the Chancery, and said, Thus must you conduct yourself. I threw down the paper before the magistrates, and told them I would have nothing to do with it; that something might happen unprovided for in my instructions, and that I must order my motions from the information of my own eyes.

H 3

SECKIN-

SECKINGEN.

Good luck, brother ! I will hence, and send thee what men I can collect in haste.

GOETZ.

Come first to the women—I'll have you together : I would thou hadst her promise before thou goest !—Then send me the troopers, and come here in private to carry away my Maria ; for my castle, I fear me, will be shortly no abode for women.

SECKINGEN.

We will hope the best.

SCENE *changes to Bamberg.*

Adela's Chamber.

Adela and Francis.

ADELA.

So, the ban is to be enforced against both ?

FRANCIS.

Yes—and my master has the happiness to march against your enemy the Duke. Gladly would I have gone too, had I not had the still greater pleasure of being dispatched to you. But I will away instantly, and soon return with pleasant news—my master so commanded me.

ADELA.

How is it with him ?

FRANCIS.

FRANCIS.

He is cheerful—and commanded me to kiss your hand.

ADELA.

There!—Thy lips glow.

FRANCIS.

[*Aside, pressing his breast.*]

Here glows somewhat yet more fiery.—Gracious lady, your servants are the most fortunate of beings!

ADELA.

Who goes against Berlichingen?

FRANCIS.

The Baron von Sirau—Farewell!—Best, most gracious lady, I must away—Forget me not!

ADELA.

Thou must first take some rest and refreshment.

FRANCIS.

I need none—I have seen you!—I am neither weary nor hungry.

ADELA.

I know thy fidelity.

FRANCIS.

Ah, gracious lady!

ADELA.

You can never hold out; you *must* repose and refresh yourself.

FRANCIS.

Such care for a poor youth!

[*Exit.*

H 4

ADELA.

ADELA.

The tears stood in his eyes.—He interests me from the heart. Never did man love so warmly and so true.

[Exit.]

SCENE *returns to Jaxthausen.*

Goetz and George.

GEORGE.

He would speak with you in person. I know him not—a tall, well-made man, with dark keen eyes.

GOETZ.

Bring him in. — [Exit George.]

Enter Lerse.

GOETZ.

God greet you!—What bring you?

LERSE.

Myself:—it is not much, but that is all I have to offer.

GOETZ.

You are welcome, doubly welcome!—A gallant man, and at a time when, far from expecting new friends, I trembled for the wavering fidelity of the old—Your name?

LERSE.

Francis Lerse.

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

I thank you, Francis, for having made me acquainted with a brave man!

LERSE.

I made you acquainted with him once before, when you did not thank me for my pains.

GOETZ.

I remember nothing of it.

LERSE.

I am sorry for that. Do you recollect when, to please the Palsgrave, you rode against Conrad Schotten, and went through Hafsfurt on an Allhallow's eve?

GOETZ.

I remember it well.

LERSE.

And twenty-five troopers encountered you in a village by the way?

GOETZ.

Exactly. I took them only for twelve—and divided my party, which amounted but to sixteen, leaving part in the town, and riding forwards with the others, in hopes they would pass me, and be thus placed betwixt two fires.

LERSE.

But we saw you, and guessed your intention. We drew up on the height above the village, in hopes you would attack us: when we observed you keep
the

the road and go past, then we rode down on you.

GOETZ.

And then I first saw that I had put my hand into the wolf's mouth. Five and twenty against eight is no jesting business. Everard Truchsess killed one of my followers. Had they all behaved like him and one other trooper, it had been over with me and my little band.

LERSE.

And that trooper—

GOETZ,

—was as gallant a fellow as I ever saw. He attacked me fiercely ; and when I thought I had given him enough and was engaged elsewhere, he was upon me again, and laid on like a fury : he cut quite through my cuirass, and gave me a flesh-wound.

LERSE.

Have you forgiven him ?

GOETZ.

I had but too much reason to be pleased with him.

LERSE.

I hope then you have cause to be contented with me, since my pattern exhibition was on your own person.

GOETZ.

Art thou he ?—O welcome ! welcome !—Can't thou

thou say, Maximilian, thou hast such a heart
amongst all thy servants !

LERSE.

I wonder you did not sooner enquire after me.

GOETZ.

How could I think that the man would engage
in my service who attacked me so desperately ?

LERSE.

Even so, my lord—From my youth upwards I
have served as a cavalier, and have had to do with
many a knight. I was overjoyed to learn we were
to attack you ; for I had heard of your fame, and I
wished to know you. You saw I gave way, and
you saw it was not from cowardice, for I returned
to the charge—In short, I did learn to know you,
and from that hour I resolved to serve you.

GOETZ.

How long wilt thou engage with me ?

LERSE.

For a year—without pay.

GOETZ.

No—thou shalt have as the others, and as the
foremost among them.

Enter

Enter George.

GEORGE.

Hans of Selbifs greets you:—To-morrow he is here with fifty men.

GOETZ.

'Tis well.

GEORGE.

It is coming to sharps—There is a troop of Imperialists come forwards, without doubt, to reconnoitre.

GOETZ.

How many?

GEORGE.

About fifty or so.

GOETZ.

No more!—Come, Lerse, we'll have a crash with them, that when Selbifs comes he may find some work done to his hand.

LERSE.

'Twill be a royal foretaste.

GOETZ.

To horse!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *a Wood; on one side, a Morass.*

Two Imperial Troopers meeting.

FIRST IMPERIALIST.

What makest thou here?

SECOND IMPERIALIST.

I have leave of absence for a little—Ever since our quarters

quarters were beat up last night, I have had such violent fits of illness that I cannot sit my horse for a minute.

FIRST IMPERIALIST.

Is the party far advanced?

SECOND IMPERIALIST.

A good way from the wood.

FIRST IMPERIALIST.

Then why do you linger here?

SECOND IMPERIALIST.

I prithee betray me not, I will to the next village and get something comfortable; it may help my complaint.—But whence comest thou?

FIRST IMPERIALIST.

I am bringing our officer some wine and meat from the nearest village.

SECOND IMPERIALIST.

So, so! he makes much of himself before our very faces, and we must starve—A fine example!

FIRST IMPERIALIST.

Come back with me, rascal.

SECOND IMPERIALIST.

Call me fool then!—There are plenty of our troop that would gladly fast three days to be as far from it as I am.

[*Trampling of horses heard.*]

FIRST IMPERIALIST.

Hear'st thou?—Horses!

SECOND

SECOND IMPERIALIST.

Alas !—Alas !

FIRST IMPERIALIST.

I'll get up into this tree.

SECOND IMPERIALIST.

And I into the marsh. [*They hide themselves.*]

*Enter on horseback, Goetz, Lersé, George and Cavaliers,
all completely armed.*

GOETZ.

Away into the wood, by the ditch on the left—then
we have them in the rear. [*They gallop out.*]

FIRST IMPERIALIST [*descending*].

This is a bad business—Michael !—He answers
not—Michael, they are gone ! [*Goes towards the
marsh.*] Alas he is sunk !—Michael !—He hears me
not : he is suffocated—Poor coward, art thou done
for—[*Loud alarm and trampling of horses.*] We are
slain—Enemies ! Enemies on all hands !

Re-enter Goetz and George on horseback.

GOETZ.

Halt, fellow, or thou diest !

IMPERIALIST.

Spare my life !

GOETZ.

Thy sword !—George, carry him to the other pri-
soners,

soners, whom Lerse is guarding behind the wood—
I must pursue their fugitive leader. *[Exit.*

IMPERIALIST.

Pray, Sir, what is become of the knight, our
officer?

GEORGE.

My master threw him head over heels from his
horse, his feather-bush was the first thing reached the
mire. His troopers got him up and ran as if the
devil drove—March, fellow! *[Exeunt.*

Camp of the Imperialists.

Captain and first Officer.

FIRST OFFICER.

They fly from afar towards the camp.

CAPTAIN.

He will be hard at their haunches—Draw out fifty
as far as the mill; if he follows the pursuit too far,
you may perhaps entrap him. *[Exit Officer.*

[The Second Officer is borne in.]

CAPTAIN.

How now, my young Sir, how like you the wolf's
jaws?

OFFICER.

O curse your jokes! The stoutest lance went to
shivers like glass—He is the devil!—He ran upon
me as if he had been that moment unchained: by
Heaven, you would have thought him a thunderbolt.

CAPTAIN.

CAPTAIN.

Thank God that you have come off at all !

OFFICER.

There is little to be thankful for ; two of my ribs are broken—Where's the surgeon ? [*He is carried off.*]

SCENE changes to Jaxthausen.

Enter Goetz and Selbifs.

GOETZ.

And what say you to this business of the ban, Selbifs ?

SELBISS.

'Tis a stroke of Weislingen.

GOETZ.

Thinkest thou ?

SELBISS.

I do not think it—I know it.

GOETZ.

How ?

SELBISS.

He was at the Diet, I tell thee, and with the Emperor.

GOETZ.

Well, shall we give them another touch to night ?

SELBISS.

I hope so.

GOETZ.

We'll away then to course these hares.

SCENE

SCENE *the Imperial Camp.**Captain, Officers and Followers.*

CAPTAIN.

This, Sirs, is doing nothing. He beats one squadron after another; and whoever escapes death or captivity, would rather fly to Turkey than return to the camp.—We must attack him once for all in a body, and seriously.—I will go myself, and he shall find with whom he has to do.

OFFICER.

I am glad of it—But he is so well acquainted with the country, and knows every pass and ravine so thoroughly, that he will be as difficult to find as a mouse in a corn magazine.

CAPTAIN.

I warrant you we'll manage to find him—On for Jaxthausen; at all events he must appear to defend his castle.

OFFICER.

Shall we all march?

CAPTAIN.

Yes, truly—Don't you know that a hundred are melted away already?

OFFICER.

Then let us away with speed, before the whole snow-ball dissolves; for this is warm work, and we stand here like butter in the sun.

[Exeunt—A march sounded.]

I

SCENE

SCENE *a Hill and Wood.**Goetz, Selbiss and Troopers.*

GOETZ.

They come in full force—Seckingen's troopers joined us in good time.

SELBISS.

We had better divide our force—I will take the left hand by the hill.

GOETZ.

And do thou, Lersé, carry 50 men straight through the wood on the right—Let them keep the high road—I will draw up opposite to them.—George, thou stayest by me—When you see them attack me, then do you fall upon their flanks : we'll beat the knaves into mummy—they little think we can hold them at the sword's point. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *changes to a neighbouring part of the wood—
A high road—On one side an eminence with a ruined
watch-tower—On the other the forest.*

*Enter on march, the Captain of the Imperialists,
with Officers and his Squadron—Drums and
Standards.*

CAPTAIN.

He halts upon the high road ! That's too impudent. He shall repent it—What ! not to fear the torrent that bursts loose upon him !

OFFICER.

OFFICER.

You will not run upon iron pikes ? He looks as if he means to plant the first that comes upon him in the mire with his head downmost—Here let us wait him.

CAPTAIN.

Not so.

OFFICER.

I entreat you—

CAPTAIN.

Sound, trumpeter—and let us blow him to hell !

[A charge sounded—Exeunt in full career.]

Selbifs, with his Troopers, comes from behind the hill galloping.

SELBISS.

Follow me !—Shout—shout !

[They gallop across the stage, et exeunt.]

Loud alarm—Lerse and his party sally from the wood.

LERSE.

Fly to the help of Goetz ! He is surrounded.—Gallant Selbifs, thou hast cut thy way—we will sow the high road with these thistle heads. *[Gallop off. [A loud alarm with shouts and firing for some minutes.]*

Selbifs is born in wounded by two Troopers.

SELBISS.

Leave me here, and hasten to Goetz.

FIRST TROOPER.

Let us stay—you need our aid.

I 2

SELBISS.

SELBISS.

Get one of you on the watch-tower, and tell me how it goes.

FIRST TROOPER.

How shall I get up?

SECOND TROOPER.

Get upon my shoulder; you can then reach the ruined part. [*First Trooper gets up into the tower.*]

FIRST TROOPER.

Alas! Alas!

SELBISS.

What seest thou?

FIRST TROOPER.

Your cavaliers fly to the hill.

SELBISS.

Hellish cowards!—I wou'd that they stood, and I had a ball thro' my head!—Ride one of you full speed—Curse and thunder them back to the field—Seest thou Goetz? [*Exit Second Trooper.*]

TROOPER.

I see the three black feathers in the midst of the tumult.

SELBISS.

Swim, brave swimmer—I lie here.

TROOPER.

A white plume—Whose is that?

SELBISS.

The captain.

TROOPER.

TROOPER.

Goetz gallops upon him—Crash! Down he goes!

SELBISS.

The captain?

TROOPER.

Yes.

SELBISS.

Brave! brave!

TROOPER.

Alas! alas!—I see Goetz no more.

SELBISS.

Then die, Selbiss!

TROOPER.

A dreadful tumult where he stood—George's blue plume vanishes too.

SELBISS.

Climb higher—Seest thou Lerse?

TROOPER.

No!—Every thing is in confusion!

SELBISS.

No further—come down—How do Seckingen's men bear themselves?

TROOPER.

So so—One of them flies to the wood—another—another—a whole troop.—Goetz is lost!

SELBISS.

Come down—tell me no more.

TROOPER.

I cannot—Bravo! bravo! I see Goetz—I see George—I see Lerse.

SELBISS.

On horseback ?

TROOPER.

Aye, aye, high on horseback—Victory ! victory !
—They fly.

SELBISS.

The Imperialists ?

TROOPER.

Standard and all, Goetz behind them—He seizes
the standard—he has it !—he has it !—A handful of
men with him—My comrade reaches him—they
come this way.

*Enter Goetz, George, Lerse, and Cavaliers, on
horseback.*

SELBISS.

Joy to thee, Goetz !—Victory ! victory !

GOETZ [*dismounting*].

Dearly, dearly bought !—Thou art sorely
wounded, Selbiss !

SELBISS.

But thou dost live and hast conquered !—I have
done little ; and the dogs my troopers—How hast
thou come off ?

GOETZ.

For the present, well.—And here I thank George,
and thee Lerse, for my life. I unhorsed the cap-
tain—They stabb'd my steed, and broke in upon
me. George hewed his way to me, and sprang
off.

off.—I threw myself like lightning on his horse, and he appeared suddenly like a thunderbolt upon another.—How camest thou by thy steed?

GEORGE.

A fellow struck at you from behind:—as he raised his cuirass in the exertion, I stabbed him with my dagger. Down he came!—and so I rid you of a backbiter, and helped myself to a horse.

GOETZ.

Then we stuck together till Francis here came to our help; and then we cut our way out.

LERSE.

The hounds whom I led made a good shew at first; but when we came to close, they fled like Imperialists.

GOETZ.

Friend and foe fled, except this little party of my own domestics who protected our rear. I had enough to do with the fellows in front; but the fall of their captain dismayed them—they wavered, and they fled. I have their banner, and a few prisoners.

SELBISS.

The captain has escaped you?

GOETZ.

They rescued him during the scuffle. Come boys—come Selbiss—make a bier of lances and boughs—Thou canst not to horse—come to my

I 4

castle.

castle. They are scattered, but we are very few ; and I know not what troops they may have in reserve. I will be your host and physician.—Wine tastes so well after action !

[*Exeunt, carrying Selbifs.*]

SCENE *the Camp.*

The Captain and Imperialists.

CAPTAIN.

I could crush you all with one hand. What ! to give way ! He had not a handful of people remaining.—To give way before one man ! No one would believe it but for a joke's sake. Ride round the country, you, and you, and you :—bring up the reserved troops, and collect our scattered soldiers, or cut them down wherever you find them. We must grind these notches out of our blades, or make pruning hooks of them.

Jaxthausen.

Goetz, Lerse, and George.

GOETZ.

Poor Selbifs is gone ! We must not lose a moment. My good fellows, I dare allow you no rest. Gallop round and collect our cavaliers. Most of them dwell near Weilern, and there they will most likely be found. Should we dally a
moment,

moment, they will be before the castle.—[*Exeunt Lerse and George.*]—I must send out scouts. It begins to be warm—Yet had I but a few stout fellows—but not of such fellows are the many composed. [Exit.]

Enter Seckingen and Maria.

MARIA.

I beseech thee, Seckingen, leave not my brother! His own horsemen, Selbifs's, yours, all are scattered; he is alone.—Selbifs is brought here dead, or mortally wounded. I fear the worst.

SECKINGEN.

Be composed—I will not leave him.

Enter Goetz.

GOETZ.

Come to the chapel—the chaplain waits—In five minutes you shall be made one.

SECKINGEN.

Let me remain here.

GOETZ.

To the chapel!

SECKINGEN.

Goetz!

GOETZ.

Will you not to the chapel?

SECKINGEN.

Willingly, and then—

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

Then you go your way.

SECKINGEN.

Goetz !

GOETZ.

To the chapel !—Come, come.

[*Exeunt.*

Camp.

Captain and Officers.

CAPTAIN.

How many in all ?

OFFICER.

A hundred and fifty odd—

CAPTAIN.

Out of five hundred.—Set on the march towards Jaxthausen before he again collects his forces and attacks us on the way.

Jaxthausen.

Goetz, Elizabeth, Maria, and Seckingen.

GOETZ.

God blefs you, give you happy days, and support the children with which he shall blefs you !

ELIZABETH.

And may they be virtuous as yourselves—then let that come which will.

SECKINGEN.

SECKINGEN.

I thank you!—And you, my Maria! as I led you to the altar, you shall lead me to happiness.

MARIA.

Our pilgrimage will be in company towards that distant and high-praised land.

GOETZ.

Good luck to your journey!

MARIA.

That was not what I meant—We do not leave you.

GOETZ.

You must, sister.

MARIA.

You were not wont to be so harsh.

GOETZ.

You are more affectionate than prudent.

Enter George.

GEORGE.

I can gather no troopers: One was persuaded, but he changed his mind and would not come.

GOETZ.

'Tis well, George. Fortune begins to look cold upon me. Seckingen, I entreat you to depart this very evening. Persuade Mary—You are her husband—let her feel it.—When women regulate our motions, they are more dangerous than enemies in the field.

Enter

Enter a Cavalier.

CAVALIER.

The Imperial squadron is on full and rapid march hither.

GOETZ.

I have diminished them by skirmishes. How many are they ?

CAVALIER.

About two hundred—They cannot be far from hence.

GOETZ.

Have they passed the river yet ?

CAVALIER.

No, my lord !

GOETZ.

Had I but fifty men, they should come no further.—Hast thou not seen Lerse ?

CAVALIER.

No, my lord !

GOETZ.

Tell all to hold themselves ready.—Weep on, my gentle Mary—Many a moment of pleasure shall be thy reward—It is better thou shouldst weep on thy wedding-day, than that too great joy should be the fore-runner of future misery.—Farewell, Mary !—Farewell, brother !

MARIA.

MARIA.

I cannot away from you, sister—Dear brother, let us stay. Dost thou hold my husband so cheap as to refuse his help in thy extremity?

GOETZ.

Yes—it is gone far with me. Perhaps my fall is near—You are but beginning life, and should separate your lot from mine. I have ordered your horses to be saddled—you must away instantly!

MARIA.

O brother! brother!

ELIZABETH [*to Seckingen*].

Assist him to persuade her—Speak to her.

SECKINGEN.

What can I say?—Dear Maria, we must go!

MARIA.

Thou too?—My heart will break!

GOETZ.

Then stay—In a few minutes my castle will be besieged.

MARIA [*weeping bitterly*].

Alas! alas!

GOETZ.

We will defend ourselves as we can.

MARIA.

Mother of God, have compassion upon us!

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

And at last we must die or surrender—Thy tears will then have involved thy noble husband in the same miserable lot with me.

MARIA.

Thou torturest me !

GOETZ.

Remain, remain !—Seckingen, thou wilt fall into the grave with me, out of which I had hoped thou should'st help me.

MARIA.

We will away—Sister—sister !

GOETZ.

Place her in safety, and then remember me.

SECKINGEN.

Never shall I repose a night till I know thou art out of danger.

GOETZ.

Sister ! dear sister !—[*Kisses her.*]

SECKINGEN.

Away ! away !

GOETZ.

Yet one moment !—I shall see you again—Be comforted, I shall see you again.—[*Exeunt Seckingen and Maria.*] I drive her away—yet when she goes, what would I give to detain her.—Eliza, thou stayest by me—

ELIZABETH.

Till death !

[Exit.]

GOETZ.

Whom God loves, he gives such a wife !

Enter George.

GEORGE.

They are near !—I saw them from the tower. The sun is rising, and I perceived their lances glitter. I minded them no more than a cat would do a whole army of mice. 'Tis true *we* play the rats at present.

GOETZ.

Go to the battlements—Look to the gates—See they are provided with stones and beams. We'll find exercise for their patience, and their fury may discharge itself at the expence of their own nails—
[*A trumpet from without — Goetz goes to the window.*]
Aha ! there comes a red-gowned rascal to ask me whether I will be a scoundrel ! What says he ?
[*The voice of the Herald is heard indistinctly, as from a distance. Goetz speaks at intervals.*] A rope for thy throat !—[*Voice again.*] “Offended Majesty !”
—Some parson has drawn up the proclamation—
[*Voice concludes, and Goetz answers from the window.*]
Surrender myself—surrender myself at all discretion !—With whom speak ye ? Am I a robber ?
Tell your captain, that for his Imperial Majesty I
entertain,

entertain, as ever, all due respect; but for himself, he may——[*Shuts the window with violence.*]

[*A sharp discharge of musquetry, answered by firing from the castle.*]

SCENE *the Kitchen.*

Elizabeth preparing food—to her Goetz.

GOETZ.

You have hard work, my poor wife!

ELIZABETH.

Would it could but last!—but you can hardly hold out long.

GOETZ.

We have not had time to provide ourselves—

ELIZABETH.

And so many people to feed!—The wine is well nigh finished.

GOETZ.

If we hold out a certain time, they must give us articles. We keep them at a fine distance—They may shoot the whole day, and wound our walls, and break our windows.—That Lersé is a gallant fellow—He slips about with his gun: if a rogue comes too nigh—Ba!—there he lies! [*Firing.*]

Enter

Enter Cavalier.

CAVALIER.

We want live coals, gracious lady !

GOETZ.

For what ?

CAVALIER.

Our bullets are spent ; we must cast new.

GOETZ.

How lasts the powder ?

CAVALIER.

There is yet no want : we spare our fire.

[Firing at intervals.] [Exeunt Goetz and Elizabeth.]

Enter Lerse with a bullet mould.

LERSE.

Go, see for lead about the house—meanwhile I will make a shift with this—*[Goes to the window, and takes out the lead frames.]* Every thing is fair. So it is in this world—no one knows what a thing may come to : the glazier that made these frames little knew that the work of his hands was to give some fellow his last headache ; and the father that got me little thought that the fowls of heaven and the beasts of the field were to pick my bones.

K

Enter,

Enter George with a leaden spout.

GEORGE.

Here's lead for thee !—When we have used the half of it, there will none return to tell his Majesty “we have not spent.”

LERSE [*cutting it down*].

A famous prize !

GEORGE.

The rain must seek some other way—But never mind that—a gallant trooper and a smart shower will always find their road. [*They cast balls.*]

LERSE.

Hold the crucible—[*Goes to the window.*] Yonder comes a fellow creeping forward with his pop-gun ; he thinks our fire is spent—He shall have the bullet warm from the pan. [*He loads his carbine.*]

GEORGE [*Sets down the mould*].

Let me see—

LERSE [*Fires from the window*].

Yonder lies the game ! •

GEORGE.

One of them fired at me as I got out on the roof to get the spout—He killed a pigeon that sat near me ; it fell into the spout—I thanked him for my dinner, and stepped in with the double booty.

[*They cast balls.*]

LERSE.

LERSE.

Now let us load, and go through the castle to
earn our dinner.

Enter Goetz.

GOETZ.

Stay, Lerse, I must speak with thee.—I will not
keep thee, George, from the sport. [*Exit George.*

GOETZ.

They demand a parley.

LERSE.

I will out and hear what they have to say.

GOETZ.

They will require me to enter myself into ward
in some town on my knightly parole.

LERSE.

That's a trifle—What if they would allow us
free liberty of departure? for we can expect no re-
lief from Seckingen. We will bury all valuables,
where they shall never find them—leave them the
bare walls, and come out with flying colours.

GOETZ.

They will not permit us.

LERSE.

It is but asking—We will demand a safe conduct,
and I will fally out. [*Exeunt.*

K 2

SCENE

SCENE *a Hall.*

Goetz, Elizabeth, George, and Troopers at table.

GOETZ.

Danger draws us together, my friends! Be cheery—don't forget the bottle! The flask is empty—Come, another, my dear wife!—*[Elizabeth shakes her head.]*—Is there no more?

ELIZABETH *[Low]*.

Only one, which I fet apart for you.

GOETZ.

Not so, my love!—Bring it out; they need strengthening more than I.

ELIZABETH.

Hand it from the cabinet.

GOETZ.

It is the last, and I feel as if we need not spare it. It is long since I have been so much disposed for joy.—*[They fill.]* To the health of the Emperor!

ALL.

Long live the Emperor!

GOETZ.

Be it our last word when we die! I love him, for our fate is similar; and I am happier than he.—He must direct his Imperial squadrons against mice, while the rats gnaw his parchment edicts. I know he often wishes himself rather dead than to
be

be the soul of such a crippled body as the empire.
 [They fill.]—It will go but once more round—And
 when our blood runs low, like this flask—when we
 pour out its last ebbing drop [*Empties the wine drop-*
ways into his goblet], what then shall be our word?

GEORGE.

Freedom!

GOETZ.

Freedom!

ALL.

Freedom!

GOETZ.

And if that survives us, we shall die happy: our
 spirits shall see our sons, and the emperor of our sons,
 happy!—Did the servants of princes shew the same
 filial attachment to their masters as you to me—Did
 their masters serve the Emperor as I would serve
 him—

GEORGE.

It is widely different.

GOETZ.

Not so much so as would appear. Have I not
 known worthy men among the princes? and can the
 breed be extinct?—Men happy in their own minds
 and in their undertakings, that could bear a petty
 brother in their neighbourhood without feeling
 either dread or envy; whose hearts were opened
 when they saw their table surrounded by their free
 equals, and who did not think free knights unfit

company till they had degraded themselves by court homage.

GEORGE.

Have you known such princes?

GOETZ.

Well!—I recollect, when the landgrave of Hanaue made a grand hunting-party, the princes and free feudatories enjoyed themselves under the open heaven, and the vassals were as happy as they; it was no selfish masquerade, instituted for his own private pleasure or vanity—To see the great round-headed peasant lads and the pretty brown girls, the sturdy hinds, and the respectable ancients, all as happy as if they rejoiced in the pleasures of their master, which he shared with them under God's free sky!

GEORGE.

He must have been such a master as you.

GOETZ.

And shall we not hope that many such will rule together some future day—to whom reverence to the Emperor, peace and friendship with neighbours, and the love of vassals shall be the best and dearest family treasure handed down from father to son? Every one will then keep and improve his own, instead of reckoning nothing gained that is not ravaged from their neighbours.

GEORGE.

And shall we then have no skirmishing?

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

Would to God there was no restless spirit in all Germany, and still we should have enough to do! We might then chase the wolves from the cliffs, and bring our peaceable laborious neighbour a dish of game from the wood, and eat it together. Were that too little, we would join our brethren, and, like cherubims with flaming swords, defend the frontiers of the Emperor against those wolves the Turks, against those foxes the French, and guard for our beloved Emperor both extremities of his empire. There would be a life, George!—to risk one's head for the safety of all Germany—[*George springs up.*—] Whither away?

GEORGE.

Alas! I forgot we were besieged—besieged by that very Emperor; and before we can expose our lives in his defence, we must risk them for our liberty.

GOETZ.

Be of good cheer.

Enter Lerse.

LERSE.

Freedom! freedom! You are cowardly poltroons—hesitating, irresolute asses—You are to depart with men, weapons, horses, and armour—Provisions you are to leave behind.

K 4

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

They will hardly find enough to tire their jaws.

LERSE [*aside to Goetz*].

Have you hid the plate and money?

GOETZ.

No!—Wife, go with Lerse, and hear what he has to say to thee.

SCENE *changes to the Court of the Castle.**George, in the stable, curries his horse and sings:*

It was a little naughty page,

Ha! ha!

Would catch a bird was clos'd in cage.

Sa! fa!

Ha! ha!

Sa! fa!

He seiz'd the cage, the latch did draw,

Ha! ha!

And in he thrust his knavish paw.

Sa! fa!

Ha! ha!

Sa! fa!

The bird dafh'd out, and the thorn,

Ha! ha!

And laugh'd the filly fool to scorn!

Sa! fa!

Ha! ha!

Sa! fa!

Enter

Enter Goetz.

GOETZ.

How goes it?

GEORGE. [*Brings out his horse.*]

All faddled!

GOETZ.

Thou takest it cheerily.

GEORGE.

As the bird that got out of the cage.

Enter all the besieged.

GOETZ.

Have you all your carabines? — Not yet!
Go, take the best from the armoury—'Tis all one—
we'll ride out.

GEORGE.

And laugh the filly fools to scorn.

Ha! ha!

Sa! fa!

Ha! ha!

SCENE *changes to the Armoury.*

Two Cavaliers choosing guns.

FIRST CAVALIER.

I take this.

SECOND CAVALIER.

I this—But yonder's a better.

FIRST

FIRST CAVALIER.

Never mind—Make ready.

[Tumult and firing without.]

SECOND CAVALIER.

Hark!

FIRST CAVALIER.

[Springs to the window.]

Sacred heaven, they murder our master!—He is unhorsed!—George is down!

SECOND CAVALIER.

How shall we get off?—By the garden-wall, and so to the country. *[Exit.]*

FIRST CAVALIER.

Lerse keeps his ground—I will to him—If they die, I will not survive them.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT

A C T IV.

SCENE *an Inn in the city of Heilbron.*

Goetz solus.

GOETZ.

I AM like the evil spirit conjured into a circle—
I fret and labour, but all in vain—The false envious
slaves—

Enter Elizabeth.

What news, Eliza, of my dear, my trusty followers?

ELIZABETH.

Nothing certain: some are slain, some are prisoners; no one could or would tell me more particulars.

GOETZ.

Is that the reward of faith, of filial obedience?—
For thy sake—Goetz!—O thou hast lived too long!

ELIZABETH.

Murmur not against our heavenly Father, my dear husband! They have their reward—It was born with them, a noble and generous heart—Even in the dungeon they are free.—Think now of appearing before the Imperial Commissioners—Their
awful

awful presence, the splendour of their drefs, and the golden chains which mark their dignity—

GOETZ.

—become them like a necklace on a fow!—
Would I could fee George and Lerse in their dun-
geon!

ELIZABETH.

It were a fight to make an angel weep.

GOETZ.

I would not weep—I would grind my teeth, and gnaw my lip in fury.—What! the apples of my eye in fetters!—And have not the dear boys loved me? Never will I rest till I see them.—What! to break their word pledged in the name of the Emperor!

ELIZABETH.

Forget that—You must appear before the Commissioners—You are in an evil mood to meet them, and I fear the worst.

GOETZ.

When will they admit me?

ELIZABETH.

They will send a serjeant-at-arms.

GOETZ.

What—The afs of justice that carries the sacks to the mill, and the dung to the field?—What now?

Enter

Enter Serjeant-at-arms.

SERJEANT.

The Lords Commissioners are at the Council-House, and require your presence.

GOETZ.

I come.

SERJEANT.

I am to escort you.

GOETZ.

Too much honour.

ELIZABETH.

Be but cool.

GOETZ.

Fear me not.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE *the Council House at Heilbron.*

*The Imperial Commissioners seated in judgement—
The Captain and the Magistrates of the city attending.*

MAGISTRATE.

We have, according to your order, collected the stoutest and most hardy of our burghers to wait in the neighbourhood.

COMMISSIONER.

We will communicate to his Imperial Majesty the zeal with which you have obeyed our illustrious commander—Are they artizans?

MAGI-

MAGISTRATE.

Smiths, coopers and carpenters, men with hands
hardened by labour—and resolute here—

[*Points to his breast.*]

COMMISSIONER.

'Tis well !

Enter Serjeant.

SERJEANT.

Goetz von Berlichingen waits at the door.

COMMISSIONER.

Admit him.

Enter Goetz.

GOETZ.

God greet you, my Lords !—What would ye
with me ?

COMMISSIONER.

First, that you consider where you are ; and with
whom.

GOETZ.

By my faith, I know it well my Lords !

COMMISSIONER.

You do but your duty in owning it.

GOETZ.

From the bottom of my heart !

COMMISSIONER.

Be seated.

[*Points to a stool.*]

GOETZ.

What, there ?—Down below ?—I can stand—That
stool

fool smells of the criminal;—as indeed does its whole apparatus.

COMMISSIONER.

Stand, then.

GOETZ.

To business, if you please.

COMMISSIONER.

We'll go on in order.

GOETZ.

I am happy to hear it—Would every one did as much!

COMMISSIONER.

You know how you fell into our hands, and are a prisoner at discretion.

GOETZ.

What will you give me if I know no such thing?

COMMISSIONER.

Could I give you good manners, I would do you a good office.

GOETZ.

A good office!—Can *you* render any?—Good offices are more difficult than the deeds of destruction.

SECRETARY.

Shall I enter all this on record?

COMMISSIONER.

Only what is to the point.

GOETZ.

Do as you please, for my part.

Com-

COMMISSIONER.

You know how you fell into the power of the Emperor, whose paternal goodness overpowered his justice, and, instead of a dungeon, ordered you to wait your future doom, upon your knightly parole, in his beloved city of Heilbron.

GOETZ.

Well—I am here, and wait it.

COMMISSIONER.

And we are here to intimate to you his Imperial Majesty's grace and clemency. He is pleased to forgive your rebellion, to release you from the ban, and all well deserved punishment; provided you do, with suppliant humility, receive his bounty, and subscribe the articles which shall be read unto you.

GOETZ.

I am his Majesty's true servant, as ever.—One word ere you go further—My people—where are they?—what is to become of them?

COMMISSIONER.

That concerns you not.

GOETZ. ✓

So may the Emperor turn his face from you in your need!—They were my companions, and they are so—What have you done with them?

COMMISSIONER.

We owe you no account of that.

GOETZ.

Ah ! I had forgot—Never was promise kept by you to the oppressed.—But, hush !

COMMISSIONER.

Our business is to lay the articles before you—Throw yourself at the Emperor's feet, and by humble supplication you may find the true way to save the life and freedom of your associates.

GOETZ.

Your paper !

COMMISSIONER.

Secretary, read it.

SECRETARY.

(*Reads*) "I Goetz of Berlichingen make public
"acknowledgement, by these presents, that I having
"lately risen in rebellion against the Emperor and
"Empire——"

GOETZ.

'Tis false !—I never offended either.

COMMISSIONER.

Compose yourself, and hear further.

GOETZ.

I will not compose myself, and I will hear no further.—Let any one arise and bear witness—Have I ever taken a step against the Emperor, or against the House of Austria?—Have I not in all my feuds conducted myself as one who felt what all Germany

L

owes

owes to its head—and what the free knights and feudatories owe to their liege lord the Emperor?—I should be a liar and a slave could I be persuaded to subscribe that paper.

COMMISSIONER.

Yet we have strict orders to persuade you by fair means, or else to throw you into jail.

GOETZ.

Into jail?—Me?

COMMISSIONER.

Where you may expect your fate from the hands of Justice, since you will not take it from those of Mercy.

GOETZ.

To jail! You abuse the Imperial power.—To jail! That was never his command.—What, ye traitors, to dig a pit for me, and hang out your oath, your knightly honour as the lure! To promise me permission to ward myself on parole, and then to break your treaty!

COMMISSIONER.

We owe no faith to robbers.

GOETZ.

Wert thou not the representative of my prince, whom I respect even in the vilest counterfeit, thou shouldst swallow that word, or choke upon it.—I was taken in honourable though private war.—Thou mightest thank God that gave thee glory, hadst thou
ever

ever done as gallant deeds as the least with which I am charged.—[*The Commissioner makes a sign to the Magistrates of Heilbron, who go out.*]—Because I would not join the iniquitous confederacy of the great, because I would not grasp at the souls and livings of the helpless—'Tis in this lies my crime!—I defended my own life and the freedom of my children—See ye any rebellion in that?—The Emperor and Empire were blinded to our hard case by your flatteries.—I have, God be praised! one hand, and I have done my best to use it well.

Enter a Party of Artisans armed with halberds and swords.

GOETZ.

What means this?

COMMISSIONER.

Ye will not harken—Apprehend him!

GOETZ.

Is that the purpose?—Let not the man whose ear does not itch come too near me—One salutation from my trusty iron fist shall cure him of headache, toothache, and every ache under the wide heaven!

[*They make at him—He strikes one down, and snatches a sword from another—They stand aloof.*]

COMMISSIONER.

Surrender!

L 2

GOETZ.

GOETZ [*with his sword drawn*].

What!—Wot ye not that depends but upon myself to make way through all these hares and gain the open field? But I will teach you how a man should keep his word.—Promise to allow me free ward, and I give up my sword, and am again your prisoner.

COMMISSIONER.

How!—Would you treat with your Emperor sword in hand?

GOETZ.

God forbid!—only with you and your worthy companions!—You may go home, good people: here deliberation is of no avail, and from me there is nothing to gain save bruises.

COMMISSIONER.

Seize him, I say!—What! does your allegiance to the Emperor supply you with no courage?

GOETZ.

No more than the Emperor supplies them with plaster for the wounds which their courage would earn for them.

A Police-officer enters hastily.

OFFICER.

The warder has just discovered from the castle-tower a troop of more than 200 horsemen hastening towards the town. They have already gained the hill, and seem to threaten an attack.

COMMIS-

COMMISSIONER.

Alas ! alas ! What can this mean ?

A Soldier enters.

SOLDIER.

Francis of Seckingen waits at the draw-bridge, and informs you that he has heard, how perfidiously you have dealt with his brother-in-law, and how fruitless has been every appeal to the justice of the Council of Heilbron. He is now come to insist upon that justice ; and if refused it, he shall fire the four corners of your town within an hour, and abandon it to be plundered by his vassals.

GOETZ.

My gallant brother !

COMMISSIONER.

Withdraw, Goetz !—*[He steps aside.]* What is to be done ?

MAGISTRATE.

Have compassion upon us and our town !—Seckingen is inexorable in his wrath—he will keep his vow.

COMMISSIONER.

Shall we forget what is due to ourselves and the Emperor ?

CAPTAIN.

Well said, if we had but men to support our dignity—but as we are, a shew of resistance would only make matters worse.—We must gain time.

L 3

MAGI-

MAGISTRATE.

We had better apply to Goetz to speak a good word for us — I feel as the flames were rising already.

COMMISSIONER.

Let Goetz approach.

GOETZ.

What would ye?

COMMISSIONER.

Thou wilt do well to dissuade thy brother-in-law from his rebellious interference — Instead of rescuing thee, he will only plunge thee deeper in destruction, and become the companion of thy fall!

GOETZ.

[Spies Elizabeth at the door, and speaks to her aside.]

Go—tell him instantly to break in and force his way hither, only to spare the town—As for the rascals here, if they oppose him, let him use force; there would be no great matter had he a fair pretext for knocking them all upon the head.

[Trampling and galloping heard.—All the Magistrates shew signs of consternation.]

SCENE changes to the front of the Council House, beset by Seckingen's Cavaliers.—A Pause.

Enter Seckingen and Goetz from the Council-House.

GOETZ.

This was help from heaven—How camest thou so much to our wish, and beyond our hope, brother?

SECK-

SECKINGEN.

Without witchcraft. I had dispatched two or three messengers to learn how it fared with thee, and heard from them of this villainy—I set out instantly, and now you have the power in your hand.

GOETZ.

I ask nothing but knightly ward upon my parole.

SECKINGEN.

You are too moderate. Avail yourself of fortune, which for once has placed worth above malice! They were doing injustice; we'll greet them with no kisses for their pains.—They have misused the royal authority, and, if I know the Emperor, he will make thee ample reparation.—You ask too little.

GOETZ.

I have ever been content with little.

SECKINGEN.

And hence hast thou ever been cut short even of that little.—My proposal is, that they shall release your servants, and permit you all to return to your castle upon your parole—not to leave it till the Emperor's pleasure be known—You will be safer there than here.

GOETZ.

They will say my property is escheated to the Emperor.

SECKINGEN.

So say we—but still thou mayest dwell there, and keep it for his service till he restores it to thee

L 4

again.

again.—Let them wind like eels in the mud, they shall not escape us!—They will talk of the Imperial dignity—of their orders—We'll take that risque upon ourselves:—I know the Emperor, and have some influence with him—He has ever wished to have thee in his service—Thou wilt not be long in thy castle ere thou art summoned to serve him.

GOETZ.

God grant it ere I forget the use of arms!

SECKINGEN.

Valour can never be forgot, as it can never be learnt—Fear nothing! When once thou art settled, I will seek the Imperial Court, where my enterprises begin to ripen—Good fortune seems to smile on them—I want only to found the Emperor's mind—The towns of Triers and Pfalz as soon expect that the sky should fall, as that I should come down upon their heads—But I will come like a storm of hail on the unsuspecting traveller; and if I am successful, thou shalt soon be brother to a prince.—I had hoped for thy hand in this undertaking.

GOETZ. [*Looks at his band.*]

O! that explains to me the dream I had the morning that I promised Maria to Weislingen.—I thought he professed eternal fidelity, and held my iron hand so fast that it loosened from the arm.—Alas! I am at this moment more helpless, and fenceless, than when it was shot from me.—

Weislingen! Weislingen!

SECK-

SECKINGEN.

Forget the traitor!—We will darken his prospects and cross his plans, till shame and remorse shall gnaw him to death.—I see, I see the downfall of my enemies, of thine—Goetz— only half a year.

GOETZ.

Thy soul soars high!—I know not how, but for some time no fair prospects have smiled upon mine—I have been in distress—I have been a prisoner ere now, but never before did I experience such a depression.

SECKINGEN.

Fortune gives spirits—Come, let us to the periwigs—They have had our conditions long enough—we must call for their resolution. [Exeunt.

SCENE *changes to the Palace of Adela—Augsburg.*

Adela and Weislingen discovered.

ADELA.

This is detestable.

WEISLINGEN.

I have gnashed my very teeth—So fair a prospect—so well followed out—and at last to leave him in possession of his castle as before!—That damn'd Seckingen!

ADELA.

The Commissioners should not have consented.

WEIS-

WEISLINGEN.

They were in the net—What else could they do ? Seckingen, the haughty and furious chief, thundered fire and sword at their ear.—I hate him—His power waxes like a mountain torrent—let it but gain two brooks, and others come pouring to its aid.

ADELA.

Have they no emperor ?

WEISLINGEN.

My dear wife—Old and feeble ; he is only the shadow of what he should be—When he heard what was done, and I proposed to lead the readiest forces in his service against them : “ Let them be ! said he ; I can spare my old Goetz his little fortress, “ and if he confines himself to it, of what can you “ complain ? ”—We spoke of the welfare of the state : “ O, said he, that I had rejected every advice which “ pushed me to sacrifice the peace of an individual “ to my own ambition ! ”

ADELA.

He has lost the very spirit of a prince !

WEISLINGEN.

We broke loose against Seckingen—“ He is my “ faithful servant, said he ; for if he has not acted “ by my express order, he has performed what I “ would have wished better than my plenipoten- “ tiaries, and I can ratify what he had done as well “ after as before.”

ADELA.

ADELA.

'Tis enough to make one tear one's very flesh!

WEISLINGEN.

Yet I have not entirely renounced hope. Goetz has given his parole to remain quiet in his castle—'Tis an impossibility for him to keep his promise, and we shall soon have some new subject of complaint.

ADELA.

'Tis the more likely, as we may hope that the old Emperor will soon leave the world, and Charles, his gallant successor, promises to bear a princely mind.

WEISLINGEN.

Charles!—He is neither chosen nor crowned king of the Romans.

ADELA.

Who does not expect and hope that event?

WEISLINGEN.

You speak so warmly that one might think you saw him with partial eyes.

ADELA.

You injure me, Weislingen.—For what do you take me?

WEISLINGEN.

I do not mean to offend—but I cannot be silent upon the subject—Charles's very unusual attentions to thee distress me.

ADELA.

And do I receive them as if—

WEIS-

WEISLINGEN.

Thou art a woman— and no woman hates a flatterer.

ADELA.

This from you?

WEISLINGEN.

It cuts me to the heart the dreadful thought, Adela!

ADELA.

Can I not cure thee of this folly?

WEISLINGEN.

When thou wilt—Thou canst leave the Court.

ADELA.

By what way or pretence? Thou art here— Must I leave thee and all my friends, to shut myself up with owls in your desolate castle? No, Weislingen, that will never do; set thy heart at ease, thou knowest I love thee.

WEISLINGEN.

That is the sheet anchor while the cable holds!

[Exit.]

ADELA.

Takest thou it so? It is in vain. The undertakings of my bosom are too great to brook thy interruption. Charles—the great, the gallant Charles—the future emperor—shall he be the only man not flattered to obey my power? Think not, Weislingen, to prevent it—Soon shalt thou to earth, if my way lies over thee!

Enter

Enter Francis. He gives a letter.

ADELA.

Hadst thou it from Charles's own hand?

FRANCIS.

Yes.

ADELA.

What ails thee?—Thou look'st mournful!

FRANCIS.

It is your pleasure that I should pine away and waste the fairest years of hope in agonizing despair.

ADELA [*aside*].

I pity him—Be of good courage, youth! I feel thy love and truth, and will not be ungrateful.

FRANCIS [*sorrowfully*].

Ere you can resolve to succour me, I shall be gone from you—Heaven! And there boils not a drop of blood in my veins but what is your own—I have not even a feeling but to love and to serve you!

ADELA.

My dear Francis!

FRANCIS.

You flatter me—[*Bursts into tears.*] Does this attachment deserve only to be sacrificed to another—only to see all your thoughts fixed upon Charles?

ADELA.

You know not what you wish, and yet less what you speak.

FRANCIS.

[Stamping betwixt remorse and rage.]

No more will I be your slave, your go-between!

ADELA.

Francis, you forget yourself.

FRANCIS.

To sacrifice at once myself and my beloved master—

ADELA.

Go from my sight!

FRANCIS.

Gracious lady!

ADELA.

Go, betray to thy beloved master the secret of my soul!—Fool that I was! I thought thee what thou art not.

FRANCIS.

Dear lady! you know not how I love thee.

ADELA.

And thou, whom I thought my friend—so near my heart—go, betray me.

FRANCIS.

Rather would I tear the heart from my body!—
Forgive me, gentle lady! my heart is too full, my
senses forsake me.

ADELA.

Thou dear, hot-headed boy!

*[She takes him by both hands, and draws him towards
her. He throws himself weeping upon her neck.]*

ADELA.

ADELA.

Leave me !

FRANCIS.

[His voice choked by tears.]

God ! God !

ADELA.

Leave me !—Walls are traitors—Leave me !—
[Breaks from him.] Be but steady in faith and love,
the fairest reward is thy own. *[Exit.]*

FRANCIS.

The fairest reward ! Let me but live till that
moment—I could murder my father, were he an
obstacle to its arrival ! *[Exit.]*

SCENE changes to Jaxthausen.

Goetz seated at a table with writing materials. Elizabeth sits beside him with her work.

GOETZ.

This idle life does not suit me. My imprisonment becomes daily more painful ; I would I could sleep or amuse myself with trifling.

ELIZABETH.

Continue writing the memoirs thou hast commenced of thy own deeds. Give thy friends evidence under thy hand to put thy enemies to shame ; make thy noble neighbours acquainted with thy real character.

GOETZ.

Alas ! writing is but busy idleness ; it comes slowly on with me. While I write what I have done, I lament the mispent time in which I might do more.

ELIZABETH. [*Takes the writing.*]

Thou art now at thy first imprisonment, at Heilbron.

GOETZ.

That was always an unlucky place to me.

ELIZABETH. [*Reads.*]

“ One of the confederates told me, that I had acted foolishly in espousing the cause of my very worst foes ; but that I might be of good cheer, for I should be honourably dealt by.”—And what didst thou answer ? Write on.

GOETZ.

I said, Have I so often risked my life for the goods and gold of others, and should I not do so for the sake of my knightly word ?

ELIZABETH.

Thus does fame speak of thee.

GOETZ.

They shall not rob me of this honour. They have taken from me all—property—liberty—

ELIZABETH.

I happened once to stand in an inn near the Lords of Millenberg and Singlingen, who knew me not—

Then

—Then I experienced rapture as at the birth of my first-born: they extolled thee to each other, and said, He is the mirror of knighthood, noble and merciful in prosperity, dauntless and true in misfortune.

GOETZ.

Let them shew me where I have preferred my interest to my honour. God knows, my ambition has ever been to labour for my neighbour as for myself, and to acquire the fame of a gallant and irreproachable knight, rather than princedom or power; and, God be praised! I have gained the meed of my labour.

Enter George and Lerse with game.

GOETZ.

Good luck to my gallant huntsmen!

GEORGE.

Such are we become from gallant cavaliers—
Boots can be cut down into buskins.

LERSE.

The chace is always something—'Tis an image
of war.

GEORGE.

Yes—if we were not always crossed by these
Imperial gamekeepers. Don't you recollect, my
lord, how you prophesied we should become

M

huntsmen

huntsmen when the world mended? We are become so, without any great chance of the other event.

GOETZ.

What goes on without?—We are cooped up here in a circle.

GEORGE.

These are mark-worthy times!—For eight days a horrible comet has been seen—all Germany fears that it denotes the death of the Emperor, who is very ill.

GOETZ.

Ill?—Our weal then is at an end.

LERSE.

And in the neighbourhood here are shocking commotions; the peasants have made a formidable insurrection.

GOETZ.

Where?

LERSE.

In the heart of Swabia; they plunder, burn, and slay. I fear me they will sack the whole country.

GEORGE.

It is a horrible warfare!—They have already arisen in a hundred places, and daily increase in number. A hurricane too has lately torn up whole forests; and in the place where the insurrection began,

gan, have been seen in the sky two fiery swords
crossing each other.

GOETZ.

God preserve my poor friends and neighbours!

GEORGE.

Alas! that we dare not ride out!

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

M 2

ACT

A C T V.

SCENE *a Village plundered by the insurgent Peasantry. Shrieks and Tumult. Women, old Men, and Children fly across the Stage.*

OLD MAN.

Away! away! fly from the murdering dogs.

WOMAN.

Sacred Heaven! How blood-red is the heaven!
how blood-red the rising sun!

ANOTHER.

'Tis fire!

A THIRD.

My husband! my husband!

OLD MAN.

Away! away!—To the wood! [Exeunt.

Enter Link and Insurgents.

LINK.

Whoever opposes you, down with him! Let
none of the booty be left—Plunder clean and quick
—We must soon set fire—

Enter Mezler coming down the hill.

MEZLER.

MEZLER.

How goes it, Link?

LINK.

Look round; you are in at the death—From whence?

MEZLER.

From Weinsberg—There was a feast!

LINK.

How?

MEZLER.

We stabbed them all, in such heaps it was a joy to see it!

LINK.

All whom?

MEZLER.

Ditrich von Weiler led up the dance—There was sport for thee! We were all in a raging heap round the church steeple.—He looked out and wished to treat with us—Baf!—a ball through his head—Up we rushed like a tempest, and the fellow soon made his exit by the window.

LINK.

Huzza!

MEZLER. [*To the Peasants.*]

Ye dogs, must I find you legs?—How they gape and loiter, the asses!

LINK.

Burn away!—Kill and roast them in the flames!
—Out with your knives!

M 3

MEZLER.

MEZLER.

Then we brought out Helfenstein, Eltershofen, thirteen of the nobility—in all eighty. What a shouting and jubilee among our boys as they broke loose upon the long row of miserable rich sinners. Heaven and earth! how they struggled, and flared on each other!—We surrounded them, and killed every soul with pikes,

LINK.

Why was not I there?

MEZLER.

Never did I see such fun!

LINK.

On! on!—Bring all out!

PEASANT.

All's clear!

LINK.

Then fire the place at the four corners.

MEZLER.

'Twill make a fine bonfire!—Hadst thou seen how the fellows writhed in a heap, and croaked like frogs! It warmed my heart like a cup of brandy. There was one Rexinger there, a fellow that, when he went to hunt with his white plume and his flaxen locks, used to drive us before him like dogs, and with dogs. I had not seen him all the while, when suddenly his droll visage look'd me full in the face—Push! went the spear between
his

his ribs—and there he lay stretched all-fours above his companions. The fellows tumbled over each other, like the hares that were driven together at their grand hunting parties.

LINK.

It smokes already! [*The village burns.*]

MEZLER.

All's in flames!—Come, let us with the booty to the main body; it halts betwixt this and Heilbron. They wish to choose a captain whom every one will respect, for we are but equals;—they feel it, and turn restive.

LINK.

Whom do they think of?

MEZLER.

Maximilian Stumpf, or Goetz of Berlichingen.

LINK.

That's well.—'Twould give the thing credit should Goetz accept it. He has been ever held a worthy independent knight. Away, away! Draw together!—We march towards Heilbron.

MEZLER.

The fire will light us on our way.—Hast thou seen the great comet?

LINK.

Yes—It is a dreadful ghastly sign!—As we marched by night we saw it well: it went towards
Eins.

M 4

MEZLER.

MEZLER.

—And was visible for an hour and a quarter, like an arm brandishing a sword, and bloody red!

LINK.

Didst thou mark the three stars at the sword's hilt and point?—

MEZLER.

—And the broad black clouds, illuminated by a thousand thousand streamers like lances and little swords?

LINK.

I saw it well—and beneath a pale white crossed with fiery ruddy flames, and among them grisly figures with shaggy hair and beards.

MEZLER.

Did you see them too?—And how they all swam about as if in a sea of blood, and struggled all in confusion, enough to drive one mad.

LINK.

Away! away!

SCENE *changes to an open country. In the distance two villages and an abbey are burning.*

The insurgents Kohl, Wild, Maximilian-Stumpf.

STUMF.

You cannot wish me for your leader; it were bad for you and for me: I am a vassal of the Palfgrave, and how shall I arm against my liege lord? Besides, you would suspect I acted not from the heart.

KOHL.

KOHL.

We knew well thou wouldst have some evasion.

Enter George, Lerse, and Goetz.

GOETZ.

What would ye with me?

KOHL.

You must be our captain.

GOETZ.

I am under ban; I cannot quit my territory.

WILD.

That's no excuse.

GOETZ.

And were I free, and you dealing with the lords and nobles as you did at Weinberg, and ravaging and plundering the whole lands, and should request me to be an abettor of your shameless raving doings—rather than be your captain, you should slay me like a mad dog!

KOHL.

That should not be done, were it to do again.

STAMF.

That's the very misfortune, that they have no leader whom they honour, and who may bridle their fury. I beseech thee, Goetz, take that office upon thee! I will be thy witness and thy surety against the ban. The princes will be grateful; all Germany will thank thee—Thou mayest persuade them to peace; the country and its inhabitants will be saved.

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

Why dost thou not take it thyself?

STUMF.

They have excused me.

KOHL.

We have no time for dallying and useless speeches—Short and good!—Goetz, be our chief, or look to thy castle and thy head!—Take two hours to consider of it.

GOETZ.

To what purpose? I am resolved now as I shall be then.—Why are ye risen up in arms? If to recover your rights and freedom, why do ye lay waste the land?—Will you abstain from such evil doings, and deal as men who know what they want?—then will I be your chief for eight days, and help you in your lawful and orderly demands.

WILD.

What was done was done in the first heat, and we only needed thy prudence to have prevented it.

KOHL.

Thou must be ours at least for a quarter of a year.

STUMF.

Say four weeks—that will satisfy both.

GOETZ.

Well, then, as far as regards me

KOHL.

—And we agree!

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

But you must promise to send the treaty you have made with me in writing to all your troops, and to punish infringers.

WILD.

Well—it shall be done.

GOETZ.

Then I bind myself to you for four weeks.

STUMF.

Good!—In what thou doest, take care of our noble lord the Palsgrave.

KOHL [*aside*].

Watch that none speak to him without our knowledge.

GOETZ.

Lerse, go to my wife—Stay with her—you shall soon have news of me.

[*Exeunt Goetz, George, Lerse, and some peasants.*]

Enter Mezler, Link, and their followers.

MEZLER.

What hear we of a treaty? To what purpose the treaty?

LINK.

It is shameful to make any such bargain.

KOHL.

We know as well what to do as you; and will do or let alone as we please.

WILD.

WILD.

This raging, and burning, and murdering must have an end one day sooner or later; and by renouncing it just now, we gain a brave leader.

MEZLER.

How?—An end?—Thou traitor! why are we here but to avenge ourselves on our enemies, and enrich ourselves at their expence? Some slave of the nobles has been tampering with thee.

KOHLE.

Come, Wild, he is mad.

[*Exeunt Wild and Kohl.*]

MEZLER.

Aye, go your way—few bands will flick by you. The villains!—Link, we'll set on our friends here to burn Miltenburg instantly; and when they make a bustle about the treaty, we'll cut their heads off that made it.

LINK.

We have the great body of peasants still on our side.

[*Exeunt with Insurgents.*]

SCENE

SCENE *a Hill, and prospect of the country. In the flat Scene a Mill. A body of horsemen ready to mount.*

Weislingen comes out of the Mill, followed by Francis and a Courier.

WEISLINGEN.

My horse!—Have you told it to the other nobles?

COURIER.

At least seven standards will meet you in the wood behind Miltenberg. The peasants bend their course that way. Couriers are dispatched in every direction to summon all your confederates. Our plan cannot fail—for they say there is division among them.

WEISLINGEN.

The better.—Francis!

FRANCIS.

Gracious sir!

WEISLINGEN.

Discharge thy errand punctually—I bind it upon thy soul. Give her the letter—She must from the court to my castle—instantly.—Thou must see her departure, and send me notice of it.

FRANCIS.

Your commands shall be obeyed.

WEISLINGEN.

Tell her she *shall* go.—[*To the Courier.*] Carry us the nearest and best road.

COURIER.

We must go round; all the rivers are up with the late dreadful rains.

SCENE, *Jaxthausen.**Elizabeth and Lerse.*

LERSE.

Gracious lady, be comforted!

ELIZABETH.

Alas! Lerse, the tears stood in his eyes as he took leave of me.—It is dreadful, dreadful!

LERSE.

He will soon return.

ELIZABETH.

It is not that.—When he went to wage honourable war, never did his danger sit so heavy at my heart—I then rejoiced at his return, which now I fear.

LERSE.

So noble a man—

ELIZABETH.

Call him not so—There lies the new misery. The miscreants!—they threatened to murder his family and burn the castle. Should he return gloomy,

gloomy, gloomy is the prospect. His enemies will raise scandalous falsehoods in accusation against him, which he never can disprove.

LERSE.

He will, and can.

ELIZABETH.

—He has broken his ban :—Canst thou say No ?

LERSE.

No !—he was constrained ; and where is there reason to condemn him ?

ELIZABETH.

Malice seeks not reasons, but pretexts. He has joined himself to rebels, malefactors, and murderers :—has become their chief. Say No to that.

LERSE.

Cease to torture yourself and me. They have solemnly sworn to abjure all such doings as at Weinsberg. Did not I myself hear them say, in half remorse, that had not that been done already it should never have been done ? Must not the princes and nobles return him their best thanks for having undertaken the dangerous office of leading these unruly people, in order to restrain their rage, and to save their lives and lands ?

ELIZABETH.

Thou art an affectionate advocate. Should they take him prisoner, deal with him as a rebel, and bring his grey hairs——Lerse, I could run mad !

LERSE.

Send sleep to refresh her body, dear Father of mankind, if thou deniest comfort to her soul!

ELIZABETH.

George promised to bring news—but he will not dare attempt it. — They are worse than prisoners. — Well I know they are watched like enemies. — The gallant boy! he would not quit his master.

LERSE.

The very heart within me bled as I left him. — Had you not needed my help, all the dangers of grisly death should not have separated us.

ELIZABETH.

I know not where Seckingen is. — Could I but send a message to Maria!

LERSE.

Do you write: — I will provide for that. [*Exit.*

SCENE *a Village.**Enter Goetz and George.*

GOETZ.

To horse, George! — Quick! — I see Miltenberg burn — Is it thus they keep the treaty? — Ride to them — Tell them my purpose. — The murderous incendiaries — I renounce them — Let them make a very ruffian their captain, not *me*, — Quick, George!

[*Exit.*

[*Exit George.*—] Would I were a thousand miles from hence, though I were at the bottom of the deepest dungeon in Turkey!—Could I but come off with honour from them!—I have contradicted them through the whole day, and told them the bitterest truths, that they might be weary of me and let me go.

Enter an Unknown.

UNKNOWN.

God greet you, gallant Sir!

GOETZ.

I thank you!—Your name?

UNKNOWN.

It is not necessary. I come to tell you that your life is in danger—The insurgents are weary of receiving from you such harsh language, and are resolved to rid themselves of you—Lower your tone, or endeavour to escape from them; and God be with you!

[*Exit.*

GOETZ.

In this way to lead thy life, Goetz! and thus to end it!—But be it so—My death will be the clearest proof to the world that I had nothing in common with the miscreants.

Enter Insurgents.

FIRST INSURGENT.

Captain, they are prisoners—they are slain!

N

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

Who?

SECOND INSURGENT.

They who burned Meltenberg—A troop of confederated cavalry rushed on them from behind the hill, and overpowered them at once.

GOETZ.

They have their reward—O George! George! —They have found him among the caitiffs—My George! my George!

Enter Insurgents in confusion.

LINK.

Up, fir captain, up!—Here is no dallying time—The enemy is near, and in force.

GOETZ.

Who burned Meltenberg?

MEZLER.

If you mean to make a quarrel, we'll soon show you we'll end it.

KOHL.

Look to your own safety and ours!—Up!

GOETZ. [*To Mezler.*]

Darest thou threaten me, thou worthless—Thinkest thou to awe me, because thy garments are clotted with the blood of murdered nobles?

MEZLER.

Berlichingen!

GOETZ.

GOETZ.

Darest thou pronounce my name ?—My children will be ashamed to bear it after such contamination.

MEZLER.

From thee this, villain ?—Slave of the nobles !—
[*Goetz strikes him down—he dies.—Exit Goetz : the rest disperse in confusion.—Alarm.*]

KOHL.

Ye are mad !—The enemy breaks in on all hands, and you dally.

LINK.

Away ! Away !—[*Cries and tumult—The Insurgents fly across the Stage.*]

Enter Weislingen and Troopers.

WEISLINGEN.

Pursue ! pursue !—Stop neither for darkness nor rain.—I hear Goetz is among them ; see he escape you not—He is fore wounded, say our friends—
[*Exeunt Troopers.*] And when I have thee—it will be doing him a favour to execute his sentence of death in prison—and then my foolish heart may beat more freely.

SCENE changes to the front of a Gipsy-but in a wild forest.—Night.—A fire before the hut, at which sits the mother of the gipsies and a girl—It rains and thunders.

N 2

MOTHER.

MOTHER.

Throw some fresh straw up the thatch, daughter :
it rains fearfully.

Enter a Gipsy-boy.

BOY.

A dormouse, mother!—and here, two field mice!

MOTHER.

Skin them and roast them, and thou shalt have a
cap of their skins.—Thou bleedest !

BOY.

Dormouse bit me.

MOTHER.

Gather some thorns that the fire may burn bright
when thy father comes : he will be wet through
and through.

Other Gipsy-women enter with children at their backs.

FIRST WOMAN.

Hast thou fared well ?

SECOND WOMAN.

Ill enough—The whole country is in uproar—
one's life is not safe a moment. Two villages are in
a light flame.

FIRST WOMAN.

So it was the fire that glared in the sky—I looked
at it long ; for flaming meteors have become so
common.

The

The Captain of the Gipsies enters with three of his gang.

CAPTAIN.

Heard ye the wild huntsman?

FIRST WOMAN.

He passed by us but this minute.

CAPTAIN.

How the hounds gave tongue!—Wow! Wow!

SECOND MAN.

How the whips clang!

THIRD MAN.

And the huntsman cheered them—Hollo—ho!

MOTHER.

'Tis the devil's chase.

CAPTAIN.

We have been fishing in troubled waters. The peafants rob each other; we may be well pardoned helping them.

SECOND WOMAN.

What hast thou got, Wolf?

WOLF.

A hare and a cock—there's for the spit—A bundle of linen—some kitchen ware—and a horse's bridle.—What hast thou, Sticks?

STICKS.

An woollen jacket have I, and a pair of stockings, and one boot, and a flint and tinder-box.

N 3

MOTHER.

MOTHER.

It is all wet as mire, and the clothes are bloody.
I'll dry them—give me here !. [*Trampling without.*]

CAPTAIN.

Hark !—A horse !—Go see who it is.

Enter Goetz on horseback.

GOETZ.

I thank thee, God ! I see fire—they are gipsies.—
My wounds bleed forely—my foes close behind !—
Great God, thou endest dreadfully with me !

CAPTAIN.

Is it in peace thou comest ?

GOETZ.

I crave help from you—My wounds are stiff with
cold—Assist me from horse !

CAPTAIN.

Help him !—A gallant warrior in appearance and
language.

WOLF [*aside*].

'Tis Goetz of Berlichingen !

CAPTAIN.

Welcome ! welcome !—What we have is yours.

GOETZ.

I thank you !

CAPTAIN.

Come to my hut !

[*Exeunt to the hut.*]

SCENE

SCENE—*Inside of the Hut.*

Captain, Gipsies, and Goetz.

CAPTAIN.

Call our mother—let her bring blood-wort and bandages. [*Goetz unarms himself.*—Here is my holiday-doublet.

GOETZ.

God reward you!—[*The mother binds his wounds.*

CAPTAIN.

I rejoice from my heart you are here.

GOETZ.

Do you know me?

CAPTAIN.

Who does not know you, Goetz?—Our lives and heart's blood are yours.

Enter Gipsy-man.

GIPSY.

Horsemen come through the wood—They are confederates.

CAPTAIN.

Your pursuers!—They shall not reach you—Away Schricks, call the others: we know the passes better than they—We shall bring them down ere they are aware of us.

[*Exeunt Captain and Men-gipsies with their guns.*

N 4

GOETZ

GOETZ [*alone*].

O Emperor! Emperor! Robbers protect thy children— [*A sharp fire of musquetry is heard.*]—The wild foresters! Steady and true!

Enter Women.

WOMEN.

Save yourself!—The enemy have overpowered us.

GOETZ.

Where is my horse?

WOMEN.

Here!

GOETZ.

[*Girds his horse and mounts without his armour.*]

For the last time shall you feel my arm—Never was it so weak. [*Exit.—Tumult.*]

WOMEN.

He gallops to join our party. [*Firing.*]

Enter Wolf.

WOLF.

Away! Away! All is lost.—The Captain shot dead!—Goetz a prisoner.

[*The Women scream and fly into the wood.*]

SCENE changes to Adela's Bed-chamber.

Enter Adela with a letter.

ADELA.

He or I!—The presumptuous—to threaten me!
What

What glides through the antichamber? [*A low knock at the door.*] Who is without?

FRANCIS, *without.*

Open, gracious lady!

ADELA.

Frank!—He well deserves that I should open to him. [*Admits him.*]

FRANCIS. [*Throws himself on her neck.*]

My dear, my gracious lady!

ADELA.

Shameless being!—What if any one heard you?

FRANCIS.

O—all—all are asleep.

ADELA.

What wouldst thou?

FRANCIS.

I cannot rest. The threats of my master—your lot—mine.

ADELA.

He was incensed against me when you parted from him?

FRANCIS.

He was as I have never seen him.—To my castle, said he, she must—she *shall* go.

ADELA.

And must we obey?

FRANCIS.

I know not, dear lady!

ADELA.

ADELA.

Thou foolish, betrayed boy!—thou dost not see where this will end.—Here he knows I am in safety—Long has he envied my freedom—He desires to have me at his castle—then has he the power to use me as his hate shall dictate.

FRANCIS.

He shall not!

ADELA.

Wilt thou prevent him?

FRANCIS.

He shall not!

ADELA.

I foresee the whole misery of my lot. He will tear me by force from his castle to immure me in a cloister.

FRANCIS.

Hell and death!

ADELA.

Wilt thou rescue me?

FRANCIS.

All—all!

ADELA.

[Throws herself weeping upon his neck.]

Francis!—O rescue us!

FRANCIS.

I will tear the heart from his body!

ADELA.

No violence!—You shall carry a letter to him full
of

of submission and obedience—Then give him this vial in his wine.

FRANCIS.

Give it!—Thou shalt be free.

ADELA.

Free!—And then no more shalt thou need to slip to me trembling and in fear—No more shall I need anxiously to say, “Away, Frank! the morning dawns.”

SCENE, *the Street before the Prison at Heilbron.*

Elizabeth and Lerse.

LERSE.

God relieve your distress, my gracious lady!—
Maria is come.

ELIZABETH.

God be praised!—Lerse, we have sunk into the abyss of misery—Now my forebodings are fulfilled!—A prisoner—secured as an assassin and malefactor in the deepest dungeon.

LERSE.

I know all.

ELIZABETH.

Know! Thou knowest nothing.—The distress is too great to be comprehended—His age, his wounds, a slow fever—and, more than all, the gloom of his own mind—There lies the mortal disorder!

LERSE.

LERSE.

Aye, and that Weislingen should be commissioner!

ELIZABETH.

Weislingen?

LERSE.

He is dispatched with uncontrollable unheard-of powers.—Link and the other chiefs have been burnt alive—two hundred broken upon the wheel, beheaded, quartered and impaled.—The country all round shews like a shambles where human flesh is rife and cheap.

ELIZABETH.

Weislingen commissioner!—O Heaven!—A ray of hope!—Maria shall to him: he cannot refuse her. He had ever a flexible heart; and when he sees her whom he once so loved, whom he has made so miserable——Where is she?

LERSE.

Still in the inn.

ELIZABETH.

Bring me to her.—She must away instantly.—I fear all.

SCENE *changes to the Castle of Weislingen.*

Weislingen alone.

WEISLINGEN.

I am so sick, so weak—My very bones are empty and hollow—this wretched fever has consumed their
very

very marrow.—No rest, no sleep, day nor night!—and in the night such ghastly dreams!—Last night again I met Goetz in the wood—He waved his sword, and again defied me to battle—I grasped mine, my hand fail'd me.—In sleep as in reality he darted on me a contemptuous look, sheathed his weapon and went behind me—Dreadful is the vision as the scene it represented.—He is a prisoner; yet I tremble to think of him.—Miserable man! Thy own voice has condemned him; yet thou tremblest like a malefactor before the vision of the night—And shall he die?—Goetz! Goetz! we guide not ourselves—Fiends have empire over us, and lead our actions after their own hellish will, and to our eternal perdition.—[*Sits down.*]—Weak! Weak! How come my nails so discoloured?—A cold, cold wasting sweat drenches every limb—All swims before my eyes.—Could I but sleep!—Ha!

Enter Maria.

WEISLINGEN.

Mother of God!—Leave me in peace—leave me in peace!—It disappears not.—She is dead, and she appears to the traitor.—Leave me, blessed spirit! Already am I wretched enough.

MARIA.

Weislingen, I am no spirit.

WEISLINGEN.

It is her voice !

MARIA.

I come to implore my brother's life from thee—
He is guiltless.

WEISLINGEN.

Hush !—Maria, angel of heaven as thou art,
thou bringest with thee the pains of hell !—Speak no
more !

MARIA.

And must my brother die ?—Weislingen, it is horri-
ble that from *me* thou must hear that he is guiltless ;
that it is *my* lot in bitter sorrow to restrain thee
from the most abominable murder.—Thy soul is
sunk low, low indeed !—Can this be Adelbert ?

WEISLINGEN.

Thou seest—the consuming breath of death hath
blasted me—my strength sinks to the grave—I die
in misery, and thou comest to drive me to despair—
Could I but speak, thy bitterest hate would melt into
sorrow and compassion.—Oh Maria ! Maria !

MARIA.

Weislingen, my brother also is ill, and in pri-
son—His severe wounds—his age—O couldst thou
see his gray hairs !—Weislingen, we too despair.

WEISLINGEN.

Enough !—Francis !

Enter

Enter Francis in great agitation.

FRANCIS.

Gracious sir !

WEISLINGEN.

The papers here, Francis—*[He gives them—Weislingen tears a packet, and shews Maria a paper.]*
Here is thy brother's sentence of death subscribed !

MARIA.

God in heaven !

WEISLINGEN.

And thus I tear it.—He lives !—But can I restore what I have destroyed ?—Weep not so, Francis !—My good youth, my distress lies deep at thy heart.
[Francis throws himself at his feet, and clasps his knees.]

MARIA *[apart]*.

He is ill—very ill.—His appearance rends my heart.—I loved him !—As I again approach him, I feel how dearly—

WEISLINGEN.

Francis, arise and cease to weep—I may recover !—Hope leaves only the dead.

FRANCIS.

You will not !—You must die !

WEISLINGEN.

Must ?

FRANCIS *[beside himself]*.

Poison ! Poison !—from your wife !—I—I gave it. *[Rushes out.]*

WEIS-

WEISLINGEN.

Follow him, Maria—he is desperate. [*Exit Maria.*]

WEISLINGEN.

Poison from my wife!—Alas! alas! I feel it.—
Torture and death!

MARIA [*within*].

Help! Help!

WEISLINGEN.

[*Attempts to rise, but cannot.*]

God!—Not even that.

MARIA [*re-entering*].

He is gone!—He threw himself desperately from
a window of the hall into the river.

WEISLINGEN.

It is well with him!—Thy brother is out of danger!—The other commissioners, Seckendorf excepted, are his friends—They will readily allow him to ward himself upon his knightly word.—Farewell, Mary!—Now go.

MARIA.

I will stay by thee—Thou poor forsaken!

WEISLINGEN.

Poor and forsaken indeed!—O God, thou art a dreadful avenger!—My wife!

MARIA.

Remove from thee that thought—Turn to the throne of mercy.

WEIS-

WEISLINGEN.

Go, thou gentle soul! witness not my misery!—
Horrible! Even thy company, Maria, even the
attendance of my only comforter, is agony.

MARIA [*aside*].

Strengthen me, Heaven!—My soul suffers as his.

WEISLINGEN.

Alas! alas! Poison from my wife!—My
Francis seduced by the detestable!—She waits—
hearkens after every horse's hoof for the messenger
that brings her news of my death—And thou too,
Maria, wherefore art thou come to awake every
numbing recollection of my sins?—Leave me,
leave me that I may die!

MARIA.

Let me stay! Thou art alone:—think me thy
nurse—Forget all—May God forgive thee as freely
as I forgive!

WEISLINGEN.

Thou spirit of love! pray for me! pray for me!
—My lips are locked.

MARIA.

He will forgive thee—Thou art weak.

WEISLINGEN.

I die! I die!—and yet I cannot die—In the fear-
ful contest betwixt life and death are the pains of
hell.

O

MARIA.

MARIA.

Merciful Father, have compassion upon him!—
Grant him one glance of thy love, that his heart
may be opened to comfort, and his soul to the hope
of eternal life, even in the agony of death!

SCENE *a narrow vault dimly illuminated—The judges
of the Secret Tribunal discovered seated, all muffled
in black cloaks, and silent.*

ELDEST JUDGE.

Judges of the Secret Tribunal, sworn by the cord
and the steel to be un pitying in justice, to judge in
secret, and to avenge in secret, like the Deity! Are
your hands clean and hearts pure?—Raise them to
heaven, and cry, Woe upon misdoers!

ALL.

Woe! woe!

ELDEST JUDGE.

Cryer, begin the diet of judgment.

CRYER.

I cry for accusation against misdoers!—Whose
heart is pure, whose hand is clean, let him accuse,
and call upon the steel and the cord for Vengeance!
vengeance! vengeance!

ACCUSER [*comes forward*].

My heart is pure from misdeed, and my hand
clean from innocent blood:—God pardon my sins

of ignorance, and frame my steps to his way!—I raise my hand aloft, and cry, Vengeance! vengeance! vengeance!

ELDEST JUDGE.

Vengeance upon whom?

ACCUSER.

I call upon the cord and upon the steel for vengeance against Adela von Weislingen.—She has committed adultery and murder—She has poisoned her husband by the hands of his servant—the servant hath slain himself—the husband is dead.

ELDEST JUDGE.

Swearest thou by the God of truth, that thy accusation is true?

ACCUSER.

I swear!

ELDEST JUDGE.

Dost thou take upon thy own head the punishment of murder and adultery, should it be found false?

ACCUSER.

I take it.

ELDEST JUDGE.

Your voices?

[They converse a minute in low whispers.]

ACCUSER.

Judges of the Secret Tribunal, what is your doom upon Adela von Weislingen, accused of murder and adultery?

O 2

ELDEST

ELDEST JUDGE.

She shall die!—shall die a bitter and double death!—By the double doom of the steel and the cord shall she expiate the double misdeed. Raise your hands to heaven, and cry, Woe unto her!—Be she given to the hand of the avenger.

ALL.

Woe! woe!

ELDEST JUDGE.

Come forth, avenger! [*A man advances.*]

ELDEST JUDGE.

There hast thou the cord and the steel!—Within eight days must thou take her from before the face of heaven: wherever thou findest her, let her no longer cumber the ground.—Judges, ye that judge in secret and avenge in secret like the Deity, God keep your hearts from wickedness, and your hands from innocent blood! [*The Scene closes.*]

The Court of an Inn.

Lerse and Maria.

MARIA.

The horses are enough rested; we will away, Lerse.

LERSE.

Stay till to-morrow; the night is dreadful.

MARIA.

MARIA.

Lerſe, I cannot reſt till I have ſeen my brother.
Let us away : the weather clears up—we may expect a fair morning.

LERSE.

Be it as you will.

SCENE—the Priſon at Heilbron.

Goetz and Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH.

I entreat thee, my dear huſband, be comforted !
—Thy ſilence diſtreſſes me—thou retireſt within thyſelf. Come, let me ſee thy wounds ; they mend daily—In this moody melancholy I know thee no longer !

GOETZ.

If thou ſeekeſt Goetz, he is long ſince gone !—
One by one have they robbed me of all I held dear—
—my hand, my property, my freedom, my renown !—My life ! what is that to what I have loſt ?
—What hear you of George ? Is Lerſe gone to enquire for George ?

ELIZABETH.

He is, my love !—Raiſe yourſelf—you will ſit more eaſily.

GOETZ.

Whom God hath ſtruck down raiſes himſelf no more !

more!—I best know the load I have to bear—
Misfortune I am inured to support—But now it is
not Weislingen alone, not the peasants alone, not the
death of the Emperor, or my wounds—It is the
whole united — My hour is come! I had hoped
it would have come only with my death—But his
will be done!

ELIZABETH.

Wilt thou eat any thing?

GOETZ.

No, my love!—Does the sun shine without?

ELIZABETH.

A fine spring day.

GOETZ.

My love, wilt thou ask the keeper's permission
for me to walk in his little garden for half an hour,
to enjoy the clear face of heaven, the open air, and
the blessed sun?

ELIZABETH.

I will—and he will readily grant it.

The Garden belonging to the Prison.

Lerse and Maria.

MARIA.

Go, see how it stands with them. [Exit Lerse.

Enter

Enter Elizabeth and Keeper.

ELIZABETH [*to the Keeper*].

God reward your kindness and mercy to my husband! [*Exit Keeper.*]—Maria, what bring'st thou?

MARIA.

Safety to my brother!—But my heart is torn afunder—Weisslingen is dead! poisoned by his wife.—My husband is in danger—the princes will be too powerful for him: they say he is surrounded and besieged.

ELIZABETH.

Hearken not to rumour; and let not Goetz remark aught.

MARIA.

How is it with him?

ELIZABETH.

I fear he will hardly long survive thy return: the hand of the Lord is heavy on him.—And George is dead!

MARIA.

George!—The gallant boy!

ELIZABETH.

When the miscreants were burning Miltenberg, his master sent him to check their villainy—At that moment a body of cavalry charged upon them: had they all behaved as George, they would have
given

given a good account of them—Many were killed :
and poor George—he died the death of a cavalier !

MARIA.

Does Goetz know it ?

ELIZABETH.

We conceal it from him—He asks me ten times
a day about him, and sends me as often to see what
is become of George. I fear his heart will not
bear this last wound.

MARIA.

O God ! what are the hopes of this world !

Enter Goetz, Lerse, and Keepers.

GOETZ.

Almighty God ! how well it is to be under thy
heaven ! How free ! The trees put forth their
buds, and all the world hopes.—Farewell, my
children ! my buds are crushed, my hope is in the
grave !

ELIZABETH.

Shall I not send Lerse to the cloister for thy son,
that thou may'st see and bless him ?

GOETZ.

Leave him where he is—he needs not my bless-
ing—he is holier than I.—Upon our wedding,
Elizabeth, could I have thought I should die thus !
—My old father blessed us, and a succession of
noble and gallant sons arose at his prayer—Thou
hast

hast not heard him—I am the last.—Lerſe, thy countenance cheers me in the hour of death, as in our moſt noble fights : then, my ſpirit encouraged yours; now, yours ſupports mine — Oh that I could but ſee George once more, to warm myſelf at his look !—You look down and weep—He is dead ? George is dead ?—Die, Goetz ! Thou haſt outlived thyſelf, outlived the nobleſt — How died he ?—Alas they took him at Miltenberg, and he is executed ?

ELIZABETH.

No—he was ſlain there !—he defended his freedom like a lion.

GOETZ.

God be praized !—He was the kindeſt youth under the ſun, and a gallant — Now diſmiſs my ſoul—My poor wife ! I leave thee in a wretched world. Lerſe, forſake her not !—Lock your hearts carefully as your doors. The age of frankneſs and freedom is paſt—that of treachery begins. The worthleſs will gain the upperhand by cunning, and the noble will fall into their net.—Maria, God reſtore thy huſband to thee !—may he never fall the deeper for having riſen ſo high !—Selbiſs is dead—and the good Emperor—and my George—Give me ſome water !—Heavenly ſky !—Freedom ! freedom !

[*He dies.*]

ELIZABETH.

Only above ! above with thee !—The world is a priſon-houſe.

P

MARIA.

MARIA.

Gallant and gentle!—Woe to this age that has
lost thee!

LERSE.

And woe to the future, that cannot know thee!

THE END.



